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A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

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Vol. IX

JANUARY, 1903

No. 1

CONTENTS

The Lieutenant-Governor	Guy Wetmore Carryl	1
Sappho to Phaoon	John Ernest McCann	35
The Young Person Next Door	Justus Miles Forman	37
Through Slumber Gate	John Winwood	46
The Shadowy Past	James Francis Cabell	47
Couronne Marine	Carmen Sylva	55
An Auto's Speed for an Hour	Harold Janismall	55
The Rebuff	J. T. Trowbridge	56
The White Carnation	Francis Livingston	57
The Jewels	Lucile Watson	65
A Winter's Tale	Felix Carmen	66
Alma Adorata	Edgar Saltus	67
The Magic Call	Venita Seibert	72
Social Life in Washington	Walden Farwett	73
A Portrait	J. A. Reed	77
Nature Study	Frank Roe Batchelder	78
The Exiled Star	Maurice Francis Egan	79
Love Song of Arcady	Augustus Wight Bomberger	86
Providence, and Miss Green	Rosamond Napier	87
Nirvana of the Suburbs	Charles Edward Barns	92
Sonnets to the Sea	Marvin Dana	93
An Every-day Affair	H. G.	95
Vigilia	Thomas Walsh	96
Atchoum!	Michel Trivaley	97
A Ghost of a Chance	O. Henry	101
Will She Remember?	Tom Hall	105
Aftermath	Myrtle Reed	106
Among the Hills	Robert Bigelow Paine	106
The Branding of Circe	Helen Frances Huntington	107
The Pool	Emery Pottle	114
"How Could He?"	A. R. M.	115
A Vagrant	Theodosia Garrison	116
At Dawn	Nannie Byrd Turner	116
Overheard at a Studio Tea	Grace Florence Reed	117
The Change	Tom P. Morgan	123
The Merchant	Clinton Scollard	123
The Débutante	Madeline Bridges	124
Bear and Forbear	Albert Lee	124
Miss Darcy in Danville	Ethel Sigbee Small	125
Making Light of Love	Harvey M. Miller	130
The Bargain	Maud Stepmey Rawson	131
Travesty	McCrea Pickering	137
A Romance in Ruffles	Minna Irving	138
Sun in the Valley	Arthur Stringer	139
The Magic	Josephine Preston Peabody	146
Vassals of Fate	Edward Clark Marsh	147
The Moths Whirl Round	Ernest McGaffey	152
Human Mathematics	William Hurd Hilkyer	153
His Suit	Paul Laurence Dunbar	154
The Bath Chair	Beatrice Buchanan	155

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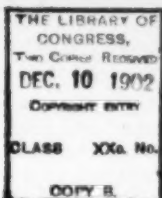
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THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

By Guy Wetmore Carryl

THE offices of the governor and the lieutenant-governor adjoined.

Each had its anteroom, in which a private secretary wrote eternally at a roll-top desk, an excessively plain-featured stenographer rattled the keys of his type-writer, and a smug faced page yawned over a newspaper, or scanned the cards of visitors with the air of an official censor. At intervals, an electric bell whirled once, twice, or three times, and, according to the signal, one of the trio disappeared into the presence of the august personage within.

A door connected the office of the chief executive with that of his lieutenant, but this was rarely opened by either, and then only after a formal tap and permission to enter had been given. It was a matter of general knowledge that the governor and the lieutenant-governor were not in sympathy; but few were aware how deep and wide and hopelessly unbridgeable was the gulf that lay between them. This was not alone a disparity of age, though twenty-eight years separated the white-haired old governor from his handsome subordinate, who had been nominated to this, his first public office, on his thirtieth birthday; nor was it wholly a difference due to the experience of the one and the inexperience of the other. The point of view of the veteran is, naturally, not that of the novice, particularly in politics. That the enthusiasms of Lieutenant-Governor Barclay should have been the disillusion of Governor Abbott, and his pitfalls the senior's stepping-stones—this was to be expected. The root of their dissimilarity

lay deeper. It was mutual distrust which kept the connecting door closed, day after day, and clogged the channel of coöperation with the sharp-pointed boulders of antagonism.

The convention which nominated the successful ticket of the preceding year had been a veritable chaos of contending factions. The labor delegates, encouraged by the unexpected strength of their representation, were not content with such nominal plums as had fallen to their share in former conventions. Led by Michael McGrath, an agitator whose native Irish eloquence, made keener and more persuasive by practice in bar-room forensics, brought him naturally to the fore, they threatened, at one stage of the proceedings, to carry all before them. The more conservative faction, its strength sapped by the formation, in its very ranks, of a reform party determined upon the fall of the "machine," was forced to yield ground. The reformers themselves, young men, for the most part, distinguished by great ideals but small ability, were too few to impose their individual will upon their opponents, yet sufficiently numerous to make their support necessary to the success of either party. The usual smooth course of the convention, upset by this unlooked-for resistance from two quarters, staggered helplessly, and was on the point of coming to a dead-lock. It was Michael McGrath's shrewd perception of the situation that solved the problem. In a brief, impassioned speech, he laid the claims of his faction before the delegates, closing with a stirring picture of the coöperation of

labor and reform, which held the convention in spellbound silence for ten seconds after he had closed, and then set the hall ringing with cheers and vigorously plied hands and feet. For an instant, he paused, with his arms folded, and his keen, blue eyes sliding over the faces before him, and then played his trump card. At his signal, a banner, hastily prepared, was borne, slowly revolving, down the central aisle, and on this were boldly lettered the words which, at the same moment, McGrath was thundering from the platform:

LABOR AND REFORM !

For Governor,

ELIJAH ABBOTT.

For Lieutenant-Governor,

JOHN HAMILTON BARCLAY.

McGrath had no need to look toward the labor faction for support. He knew what the name of Elijah Abbott meant in that quarter. Before the cheering of the now allied forces of labor and reform had fairly died away, he had moved that nominations were in order, and, ten minutes later, while the partisans of the "machine" were still endeavoring to collect their wits, the main business of the convention was an accomplished fact, and Abbott and Barclay were declared the regular Democratic nominees for governor and lieutenant-governor of the state. In six weeks followed their election by a small plurality, and, on the first of January, the two men moved into their adjoining rooms, in the inexcusably unlovely state capitol, on the main hill of Kenton City, wherein they were, thenceforward, separated, one from the other, by two inches of Georgia pine and a practically infinite diversity of principle and prejudice.

From the first, their relationship had been no better than an armed truce. Both were courteous men, the one because it was his policy, the other because he was to this manner born. There was no need for them to discuss their individual creeds. They

tacitly accepted the fact that there was not a parallel between the two. From the moment when his election was assured by the returns, Abbott was candidly the man of the labor—nay, more, of the socialist—party. McGrath and his associates manipulated him as readily as a marionette. The promises and pledges of the campaign were ruthlessly jettisoned. If Governor Abbott did not stand for anarchy, it was only because, for the moment, anarchy was not the demand of his party. Withal, he was dignified and self-possessed, robed in an agreeable suavity, which became him at functions and ceremonials, and assured his popularity with those—and they were, as always, in the majority—who did not look below the surface.

Lieutenant-Governor Barclay had not been ten days in office before he realized the futility of resistance to the established political creed, as personified in his superior. He had accepted his nomination, and welcomed his election, with an almost quixotic elation in the opportunity thus opened to him. He would accomplish—oh, there was no telling what Lieutenant-Governor Barclay would not accomplish!

He was standing at his office-window now, staring out disconsolately over the sloping lawns of the capitol grounds, mottled with thin patches of snow, which had contrived to withstand the recent thaw, and he was telling himself, for the thousandth time, the dispiriting fact that, as a force for good or evil in the destiny of his state, he was no more significant than his stenographer's type-writer or his secretary's roll-top desk. With all his ideals, with all those pledges which are infinitely more vital when made to one's conscience than when made to one's party, he found himself merely a cog in the state machinery—a cog, too, that, seemingly, might be skipped at any or every time, without in the least degree disturbing the movement of routine. On the few occasions, in the early days of their official relation, when he had ventured

to set his will in opposition to that of the governor, there had not been manifest in the latter's attitude even that spirit of resistance which spurs men to more active and resolute endeavor. Governor Abbott had smiled pleasantly upon him, and then quietly shifted the conversation into other channels, with an air of selecting a topic more suited to his companion's comprehension. Finally, on one occasion, when Barclay had voiced his opinion with an energy which savored of rebuke, the governor had gone further, and had asked, calmly: "And what were you proposing to do about it?" After that, Barclay had relinquished the unequal struggle, and resigned himself to the unavoidable conclusion of his impotency.

It is a situation which tries men's souls, this of utter helplessness in the face of plain duty. He could have no hope of making his position clear to the constituency to which he was responsible. Debarred on the one side from taking an active part in the administration of state affairs, and bitterly arraigned on the other on the grounds of inefficiency, laxity, and indifference to duty, the third month of office found John Barclay in a fair way to be ground to powder between the mill-stones of impuissance and hostile criticism. The men of his party, who had, in conviction and statement, based their hopes of political reform upon the frankly-avowed platform of his principles, now passed him coldly, with a bare nod, sometimes with none whatever; the labor element jeered joyously at his attitude; the "machine" pointed to him as proof of the fallacy of the reform creed. It is easy to expect great performances from great promises, easier still to outline the duties and condemn the delinquencies of another; and not even Barclay's knowledge of his own good faith was sufficient compensation for the sneers of press and public which fell to his share. As he surveyed the dispiriting prospect from his office-window, on that late February afternoon, he was near to resigning his

position and, with it, all further pretension to political prominence.

In the opinion of those competent to judge, the state of Alleghenia was going to the dogs. A press, distinguished alike for the amplitude of its headlines and the paucity of its principles; a legislature, of which practically every member had not only a price, but such a price as the advertisements describe as being "within the reach of all"; a governor, who avowedly stood ready to sanction the most extreme pretensions of the notoriously corrupt party which had secured him his election—here, surely, were good and sufficient reasons for the generously bestowed disapproval of Alleghenia's sister states. In all the *personnel* of her government, there was but one man sincerely devoted to her advancement on the lines of integrity and non-partisanship. And that man was Lieutenant-Governor Barclay, whose influence on the trend of affairs was approximately that of the proverbial fly on the hub of the revolving wheel.

The lieutenant-governor had turned back to his desk, and was arranging his papers, preparatory to departing for the day, when his ears were greeted by the unusual and unwelcome sound of a rap upon the communicating door. Instinctively, before replying, he braced himself for an unpleasant encounter. It was his experience that the governor's room was akin to Nazareth of old, in that no good was apt to issue therefrom. Nevertheless, as Governor Abbott entered, in response to Barclay's, "Come!" it was difficult to believe that he was aught but what he appeared to be—a courteous, conspicuously well-dressed and white-haired gentleman of sixty, or thereabouts, smooth-shaven, save for side-whiskers of iron gray, with a habit of rubbing his hands, and an inclination from the hips forward which suggested a floor-walker. In brief, the governor of Alleghenia seemed the type of man who turns sideways and slips through narrow places, rather than run the risk of

barking his elbows by a face-front advance. In reality, he was somewhat less pliable than a steel rail.

"You are going?" he asked, seeing how Barclay was employed.

"I was thinking of it," replied the lieutenant-governor. "Of course, if there is anything——"

Governor Abbott seated himself on the edge of the desk, holding a lapel of his coat in each hand, and surveyed his subordinate from under his drooping eyelids, with his head cocked on one side.

"I believe you know Peter Rathbawne," he said.

"I do; I am engaged to his daughter."

"Ah! That is what I thought."

The governor looked contemplatively at the ceiling, closing his right eye, and nibbling behind his pursed lips.

"Peter Rathbawne," he said, "is the second most obstinate man in Kenton City, if not in Alleghenia. I'm afraid he thinks he is the *most* obstinate. If so, he does me an injustice. His mills are the largest in the state. I am told that, when they are running full-strength, they employ over four thousand hands."

"Something like that number, I believe," put in Barclay, as the governor seemed to pause for a reply.

"Ah! It is a pity for such an industry as that to be tied up, on account of one man's obstinacy."

"I had not heard—" began Barclay; but Governor Abbott continued steadily, disregarding the interruption:

"Yesterday morning, Mr. Rathbawne discharged fifteen employees on the ground of incompetency. It is hard to know what Mr. Rathbawne means by incompetency. These men were not new-comers. Some of them had been in the mills for as much as eighteen months. It seems as if he might have discovered the alleged incompetency long ago. It is more or less arbitrary, one might say, this discharging men by the wholesale."

"I suppose," commented Barclay, "that a man may do as he will with his own."

"Ah," said the governor, lifting his hands from his lapels with a little gesture of deprecation, but immediately replacing them; "but *can* he? A man in Peter Rathbawne's position has a responsibility to fulfil toward the community. He cannot beggar men for a caprice—because his horse has gone lame, or his breakfast has not agreed with him. He must show reasons—give an accounting. He must be fair."

"Oh, when it comes to fairness," laughed the other, "I assure you, Governor Abbott, you won't find Mr. Rathbawne's equal this side of the Pacific. He's famous for it."

"He *has* been," corrected the governor. "In the present instance, he seems to have fallen below standard. He has declined to reconsider his decision in the case of the discharged men. What is worse, he has flatly refused to see the committee appointed by the union."

"I'm not surprised at that," said Barclay, slowly, fingering a paper-cutter on the desk before him. "Mr. Rathbawne is peculiar in one respect. He supports and considers the union in every other, but he has always insisted upon his right to discharge the hands at will, and without giving reasons. Incompetency is only a word which is used to cover more serious causes."

"Well, he's wrong," said the governor, with a heat unusual to him; "he's dead wrong, Mr. Barclay, and he will find it out before he's a day older."

"Do you mean——?"

"I mean that, if the men in question are not taken back before to-morrow noon, or a better reason given for their discharge, every man, woman, and child in the employ of the Rathbawne mills will be out on strike. The question is, what is Peter Rathbawne prepared to do?"

The silence that followed was broken only by the tap-tap-tap of the lieutenant-governor's paper-cutter on the silver-mounted blotter. Presently, he looked up and met the governor's eye.

"If you wish my opinion, sir," he answered, "it is that Mr. Rathbawne would fight such a point to a standstill. He's sole owner of the mills, and he's a rich man. He has always treated his employees as if they were his own children. If they turn on him now, for something which, from their experience of his character, they must know was fair and justifiable——"

"But was it?" interrupted the governor.

"I don't know the facts, sir, but I know Peter Rathbawne," said Barclay, throwing back his head; "and I can say, with clear conviction, that it must have been! If, as you suggest, the hands go out, I think he would close down the mills for a year, and go abroad. He's a man who doesn't argue; he simply acts. I fancy there wouldn't be much opposition left by the time he wished to re-open."

"Provided, always, that there were anything left to re-open," suggested the governor, softly.

"The state troops have more than once proved their ability to assure the sanctity of property," answered his subordinate, with a touch of the old pride with which he had assumed office.

"H'm," said Governor Abbott. "But calling out the militia is a serious matter, to say nothing of the expense entailed. Considering that the difficulty is due entirely to mere obstinacy—er—one might not feel justified——?"

He hesitated, briefly, under the lieutenant-governor's keen glance, and then swerved from this line of suggestion.

"What I wanted to say was this: you are a friend of Mr. Rathbawne's—something more than a friend, indeed. No doubt he has a respect for your opinion, as you have for his. Now, if, in the course of a quiet chat—it will have to be to-night—you should point out the situation that threatens him, the distress that a strike will cause, the probable destruction of his property, perhaps he might consent to reinstate the discharged men to-morrow morning."

"It would be a surrender of principles, to which he would never consent," said Barclay, firmly. "Of that I am sure. Moreover, sir, I should be speaking against my own convictions, were I to advise him to adopt such a course."

The governor's lip wrinkled slightly. "The union is prepared to do the right thing by whomever settles this question," he said.

"I hope you don't mean that!" exclaimed Barclay. "You are the first man to make such a suggestion to me. Pardon me, Governor Abbott, but I cannot but think the executive chamber in the capitol of Alleghenia a singular place for it to be mentioned."

The governor held up his hand. "You misunderstand me," he said. "One would suppose I had offered you a purse! I mean simply that the popularity of the man who averts this strike will be an assured fact. You would be the idol of the working-people, and hardly less esteemed by the element of capital. Moreover, you would be doing a humane and merciful thing. You are the only man who is in a position to approach Rathbawne, and, if you will excuse the suggestion, I think you can hardly afford to throw away the chance. As it is, you—er—you are not popular, Mr. Barclay."

This time the silence was broken by a single, sharp little click—the latch of the connecting door snapping into place. The lieutenant-governor sank slowly into his revolving chair, tipped back, swung round a half-circle, and stared out disconsolately over the sloping lawns of the capitol grounds, mottled with thin patches of snow.

II

"You've come to dinner," said Miss Natalie Rathbawne, an hour later, as the lieutenant-governor stepped through the portières and found her alone at the tea-table. "But, first, you are cold and probably cross, and you need a big chair and a cup of tea and some hot toast."

"Your summary of the situation is so exhaustive," laughed Barclay, "that there seems to be nothing left for me to say, except that you are the most beautiful girl in the world, and that I think I must stand still a moment, and just look at you, before I accept any of the luxuries you suggest."

"I see I've made one mistake," said the girl. "You are not cross!"

"Why should I be?" asked Barclay, standing before her with his long legs far apart, and rocking to and fro from his heels to his toes, and back again. "When a man has been walking for half an hour through a gnawing, February air, and suddenly, out of all proportion to his deserts, comes upon a rose in bloom, is that a reason for being cross?"

She was very small and deliciously delicate, was Natalie Rathbawne, like a little Dresden image, with an arbutus-pink complexion, brown hair and deep-blue eyes, clouded dreamily, except when they snapped with humor, or dilated and cleared under the impetus of suggested thought. A doll-like daintiness of tiny pleats and ruffles, fresh bows and fine stitching, pervaded everything she wore, and, if her voice inspired the hackneyed comparison of running water, it was of water running under moss, the sound whereof is as different from that of an open brook as is music from discord.

To the mind of John Barclay, the barely believable fact that this little miracle of beauty—this pocket Venus, as he was wont to call her—actually belonged to him, remained one of the mysteries of life. He could not, in his present mood, be expected to remember, even if he had ever fully realized, that he himself was tall, broad-shouldered, clean-cut and clean-lived, with the unmistakable stamp of the American gentleman on his linen and his simple, well-fitting clothes, and the evidences of a sane, regular existence in his steady hands, his clear eyes and his firm mouth—a man of whom any woman might be proud, and of whom this particular woman was proud—extravagantly so! For the first tribute

which a lover lays at the feet of his lady is, in ordinary, the stamped-upon and abused wreath of his personal attributes, which he has taken remarkable pains to render as despicable as possible, and which, in some miraculous manner, her imagination contrives not only to rehabilitate, but to imbue with a preposterously exaggerated splendor.

"I wonder," added the lieutenant-governor, presently, "whether, when gentlemen are invited to tea, they are supposed to kiss the hostess on entering?"

"If you are in any doubt about it," observed Natalie, with an air of superb indifference, "I advise you to write to the etiquette editor of the *Kenton City Record*. She is probably sixty-two years old, looks like an English walnut, and has never had a proposal in her life, and so knows all about——"

What the lady in question was supposed to know all about was, for sufficient reasons, never made clear. There are occasions, despite the manuals of polite behavior, when interruption cannot be regarded as rudeness.

Barclay heaved a long sigh of satisfaction, as he took his tea and two thin slices of toast, and settled himself in his chair.

"Do you think it possible," he asked, "for a man to be asleep for six weeks, dreaming that he is in another Garden of Eden, with an Eve in a French frock, who has no partiality for apples——"

"I love them!" said the girl.

"—and then wake up," he continued, "and find that it isn't true, after all—that he's only a poor dog of a politician—that the garden is a dingy office, and the flower-beds full of briars and pitfalls?"

"You've been eating pie again for luncheon," said Natalie, severely, "and it always makes you morbid. No! I don't suppose anything of the kind. If I did, I should hang on to your coat-tails like fury, and keep you in dreamland, whether you wished to wake up or not!"

"It's all too good to be true! How dare you be so beautiful?"

"John!"

"Well, littlest and most lovely in the world? You look serious."

"I hope it's without cause," answered the girl, wrinkling her forehead, "but I'm afraid there's a reason why I should. John, I thought I saw Spencer Cavendish to-day."

"It's not impossible, dear, though I had imagined he had taken root in some South Sea island, long ago. That's what he was always expecting to do, you remember. How I hated that man!"

"You were good friends, once."

"Yes—and should be yet, if I had not been the most jealous mortal that breathed, and he the most hot-tempered. There was a reason, you know—a dear little reason! I could forgive him everything, now."

"That hurts me, John. I'm so happy, boy dear, that I wish everybody else to be happy, as well. And all said and done, he loved me. You know a woman never forgets that."

"Until the man marries another woman!"

"Then less than ever, John! And, besides, Spencer never married. He knew I loved you, long before you did! And then he went out of my life—out of his own—into darkness. I can't forget it! I can't forget that I broke up your friendship."

"Dearest!"

"I did, John! It wasn't my fault, perhaps, or anybody's, for that matter, but the fact remains. And then—you remember the papers were full of it? Think of a man like Spencer Cavendish in the police-courts, not once, but a dozen times. Think of what Judge Meyer called him at last—'a common drunk!' Oh, John!"

"Dear heart! Why should you think of such things? Of course, it wasn't your fault. He was a hot-headed, reckless chap, full of nerves. If *Lochinvars* were permitted in these days, he would have ridden up to your door on a black horse, killed Thomas, and carried you off across his saddle!

As it was, he let himself go, and disgraced himself. I tried to talk to him, but he wouldn't have it—called me an insolent cub, and worse. I had to give it up. But all that's done with, long ago. He hasn't been seen in Kenton City for two years and more, and I've no doubt he's pulled himself together, and is living a straight life somewhere. He had lots to him, with all his recklessness. A chap like that, with no family, with brains, and only his own living to make, could forge ahead anywhere."

"But, John, suppose I should tell you that, when I saw him to-day, he was—begging?"

Barclay smiled at her earnest, troubled face, as he replaced his cup on the tea-table.

"I'm afraid I should laugh at you, Violet Eyes," he answered. "Granted that he has come as low as that, which is one of the most unlikely things in the world, it would hardly be in Kenton City, would it?—a place where his face is known to a thousand people. Tell me about it. What made you think you saw him?"

"I was coming out of Kendrick's, and just about to get into the brougham, when I saw that some one was holding the door open for me. I looked up carelessly, as one does under the circumstances, and, John—I *know* it was Spencer Cavendish! At first, I was sure, and then I wasn't, because he was so pale and thin, and had a beard; and, before I thought what I was doing, I said, 'Home,' to Patrick, and stepped in, and put my hand on the door to close it. Then I looked up again, and saw his face peering in at me; and there could be no mistake. It *was*! I was going to speak, but he was gone in a flash. I saw him disappearing in the crowd—*slinking*, John—with that dreadfully pathetic air that all beggars have, his shoulders all hunched up, and his head bent, and his hands in his pockets. He was cold, John, I could see that, and, no doubt, hungry. And there I was in that dreadful little brougham, with my hateful furs, as warm as toast,

and I didn't even speak to him. I could have died of shame!"

She buried her face in her hands, bending low over the tea-table. Barclay was leaning forward in his chair, his lips set.

"It's impossible," he murmured; "impossible!"

The girl looked up suddenly, a white spot in the centre of each cheek, where the pressure of her thumb had left its mark upon the tender, pink flesh.

"Improbable, yes!" she said; "but not impossible. Oh, I wish I could believe otherwise, but I'm sure! I'm sure! And, even granted that I was mistaken, there is always the chance. Oh, John, you are so big, so strong, so powerful now! Think of it—lieutenant-governor of Alleghenia! You can do anything. And, if he is here in Kenton City, homeless, cold, hungry, you must find and help him—for me, John!"

The lieutenant-governor drew a sharp breath. "Natalie," he said, almost in a whisper, "surely you don't——"

"John! Why, boy dear, I love you better than anything in the whole, wide world. I could die for you—I could sell myself for you, John, if you were in trouble or want, and I could help you so! You know that. But Spencer Cavendish loved me, once; he offered me all that a man can offer a woman. You can afford to be generous, John."

Barclay rose, went over to her tenderly, and placed his arm across her shoulders.

"Dearest," he said, softly, "I hope—I believe that you are overwrought, fanciful, that it is not true. But, if it is—if Cavendish is begging in our streets, why, then, so surely as I am lieutenant-governor of Alleghenia, I will pull him out of them, and make a man of him, if it takes a month and every police officer and detective in Kenton City to do it. And that not alone for your sake, Tenderest Hearted, but for mine. I can afford to be generous; God bless your sweet face, I can indeed!"

And he bent over, and kissed her hand.

At the Rathbawnes' dinner-table that night the conversation stumbled listlessly over unimportant topics, or languished utterly, until Mrs. Rathbawne, followed by her daughter, left the men to their cordials and cigars.

Besides the lieutenant-governor, there was one other guest, Amos Broadcast, brevetted major for conspicuous gallantry at Lookout Mountain, and now colonel of the Ninth Regiment, N.G.A., the crack militia organization of Kenton City. Colonel Broadcast was close upon sixty, but his great, square back, his rigid carriage and his black hair, only slightly touched with gray, clipped a decade from his years in appearance. His eye was one that was famous throughout the Alleghenia Guard—the eye of one accustomed to command, not one man, or two, but a thousand; and the eye of one accustomed to obedience, immediate, machine-like and unquestioning. He had fought side by side with Peter Rathbawne in many a tight place in the black days of '62, and in many another, full as tight, since then, on battle-fields commercial and political. No word of confidence or affection had ever passed between them, and nothing could have been more entirely superfluous.

The men drew their chairs nearer, as the door closed behind Natalie and Mrs. Rathbawne, and, lighting the long perfectos that were their host's sole extravagance, inhaled and breathed forth that first matchless whiff of smoke, which makes a whole day of weariness and vexation worth the while.

When Rathbawne, who was the first to break the silence, finally began to speak, it was in a low but curiously intense voice, from which the others instinctively took their cue. He was a short man, inclined to stoutness, but with the underhang of jaw which tells of indomitable perseverance and rigid resolution. It was

doubtful whether, in calling him the second most obstinate man in Alleghenia, Governor Abbott had accorded Peter Rathbawne the full measure of his due.

"Gentlemen," he said, with the somewhat stilted formality which was part of his manner, "I will say to you what I wouldn't say to others—I'm in a hole. For twenty years, I've been building up the Rathbawne mills, giving them every hour of my thought, every particle of my strength. I've seen them grow from a little shanty on the outskirts of Kenton City to a group of buildings covering four solid squares, filled with modern machinery and employing four thousand, two hundred and odd hands. I've been a business man, but I've been a fair man, too. No one can say that I ever clipped wages, even when I had to run the mills at a loss, as I've had to do more than once. I gave my people an eight-hour day, long before the law jammed it down the throats of other mill-owners. I swallowed the union, though it was a bitter mouthful. There has never been a just complaint from one of my employees that wasn't attended to in short order, if it was in my power to do it. There's many an old fossil on my pay-roll to-day who isn't worth his salt, but he stays there and will continue to stay there as long as he lives, because he did his best when he could, and it isn't his fault if he's dead-wood now. But one thing I've stuck to, and that's my right to discharge a hand when I see fit, without dictation from the union or anybody else. In the past, this has been simple. One man, now and again, isn't a ripple on the surface of four thousand employees. And there was always a good reason. The others saw that, and there was never a finger raised. But now it's different. There has been a band of young good-for-nothings in shop 22, who were full, chock-a-block, of socialism and equality and workmen's rights, and God knows what not! They've talked enough poisonous gas to the other hands to blow up a state. They've distributed pam-

phlets, and made speeches, and organized clubs, and fomented discord, until I was sick and tired of it. There wasn't one square day's work in the whole fifteen of them put together. And, when I'd stood them as long as I could—which was at ten o'clock yesterday morning—I discharged them all in a bunch; and, if there had been a steep place handy, I'd have expected to see the lot of them run violently down it into the sea. For, if ever there was a band of devils made incarnate, it was in that same fifteen, who were sowing anarchy broadcast through the Rathbawne mills!

"Now—what? Lo, and behold, they all are henchmen and disciples of Michael McGrath, whom we in Kenton City know to our cost, and regular and loyal members—save the mark!—of his union. Well, gentlemen, I've got that union about my ears like a nest of hornets, with McGrath at the head; and, unless those fifteen men are reinstated by noon to-morrow, my four thousand hands will be out on strike, and the Rathbawne mills will be tied up as tight as a drum!"

"Fight 'em!" said Colonel Broadcastle, curtly, as the other paused.

"That's what I mean to do—but where am I going to come out? If I thought I was going to have your regiment to back me up, Broadcastle, or even the Kenton City police, why, well and good. But *am* I? No, sir! No, sir! Not with Elijah Abbott in the governor's chair, I'm not; you know that as well as I. Why, Broadcastle, I'd rather see McGrath himself at the capitol than that smooth-spoken blackguard!"

He paused again, relighted his cigar, and then continued:

"The Rathbawne mills are like the fruit of my own body to me. I love them! I love every brick and stone of them that I've put in place, as it were, with my own hands. If they should burn or be burned, I think it would kill me. And yet I could watch them go with a lighter heart, God knows, than that with which I foresee the misery that's coming to those

people of mine who are going to starve at the bidding of a band of blacklegs, and that not even because they think the cause a just one, but simply because they can't help themselves. It isn't only that ruin is staring me in the face—though there's that possibility in the situation, too—but that privation and despair are lying in wait for them. God! what an iniquity!

"But I can't give in, Broadcastle; I can't give in, John Barclay! I know I'm right, and, what's more, it isn't as if I were yielding one point; it would only be the beginning. It's a principle I've held out for. If I give in now, I might as well turn over the mills to McGrath at once, and let him run them to suit his own blackguardly will. And yet, if I don't yield, I'm precipitating disorder, and bloodshed, and the untold suffering of four thousand souls. What am I to do?"

"Fight 'em!" said Colonel Broadcastle.

Rathbawne turned from him to the lieutenant-governor, and to the latter, knowing the man that he had been, there was something indescribably heart-rending in the irresolute, trembling gesture of the half-raised hands, the slow shake of the head, and the pathos of the raised eyebrows and drooping lips.

"John," he said, "I'm an old man, and you're a young one; but I'm a plain citizen, and you're the lieutenant-governor of Alleghenia. You know how things stand. Now, I've given you my girl, and after that it's not much to put my confidence as well into your hands. I'm getting on; my strength isn't what it was. I don't believe I could stand a protracted struggle with the union, but I'll go by what you say. What shall I do?"

The lieutenant-governor raised his eyes from the finger-tips with which, as the other was speaking, he had been plucking at the cloth.

"Fight them, Mr. Rathbawne," he answered, "and may God help you—because I can't!"

III

MORE heartsick than he cared to confess, even to himself, the lieutenant-governor left the Rathbawnes' earlier than was his wont, despite the fact that his host and Colonel Broadcastle were still engaged in discussing the impending situation, and that Natalie, with a batch of new music, was waiting for him at the piano. He pleaded an unusually busy day and his consequent fatigue as an excuse. At half after nine, he found himself about to light a second cigar, on the steps of the Rathbawne residence, and shivering a little in the night air, which stung the inside of his nostrils and set his eyes watering.

Raw as the day had been, it had turned colder now, but the night was superbly clear. The sky seemed to have drawn nearer to the earth, and the stars twinkled so sharply and clearly against its deep blue-black, that they resembled in form their conventionally five-pointed counterfeit of silver paper. A brisk wind whirled a few dried leaves in whispering eddies across the smooth asphaltum of the driveway, but beyond this and the peevish sputtering of the arc-light on the opposite corner, there was no sound.

It was the kind of night which, with its crystal clearness and its steely intensity, stirs the normal pulse to keen exhilaration; yet never had John Barclay felt more hopelessly dispirited, more utterly at a loss to see the way before him. That anxiety, distress, possibly actual disaster, should be impending over this house, where lay his heart, his happiness and his hope, was sufficiently disturbing in itself. That he should not be able, despite his position, to raise a hand to avert the calamity, was worse. But that the battle was to be a battle for the right, and yet, as it seemed, foredoomed from the start to end in disaster—since no aid could be expected from the strong arm of the law, to which the partisans of principle turn naturally for support—this was worst of all.

Yet he felt himself able to snatch out of such dangerous surroundings the littlest and most lovely woman in the world. She, at least, should not suffer. And out of this nightmare of powerless prominence, of impotent position, he himself could retire into private life, and be no less a man than he had been before.

But from the reproach of corruption which had fallen upon her, and the impending slur of anarchy, who was to rescue Alleghenia? The lieutenant-governor set his lips and drove his nails into his palms, as he stood in the shadow of the Rathbawnes' doorway, looking up at the sky of the February night. He was not a religious man—as the term goes—but in that moment he said a better prayer for the welfare of his state than had ever fallen from the lips of any priest in Kenton City.

He was about to strike his match, when an instinct, rather than an actual perception of movement, arrested his hand. Bradbury avenue, upon which stood the Rathbawne house, was situated in one of the quieter residence-districts that prided itself on the turfed spaces between its dwellings, pretentious enough, for the most part, and the double rows of trees which lined its thoroughfares. It was one of these trees which, at the moment, attracted Barclay's attention. It lay in a direct line between himself and the arc-light on the corner, and its trunk, in some miraculous manner, had abruptly developed an elbow, and then an arm. The lieutenant-governor was still staring at this phenomenon, when it was as abruptly explained by the sudden emergence from shadow of a man, who had apparently been standing on the side of the tree nearest to the house. He was crossing the avenue obliquely, when something about his bearing caused the lieutenant-governor to lean forward and follow him intently with his eyes. It was all there, as Natalie had said—the lifted shoulders, the bent head, the unmistakable, pathetic air of the beggar. Then, as he neared the light,

the man gave a short, upward strain of neck and chin, the impatient movement of a man whose collar annoys him. The trick was too familiar to have been forgotten. The next moment Barclay's heels were pounding on the asphaltum behind this figure, and then one hand fell upon the man's shoulder and whirled him around.

In the oddly intense light of the arc-light above, which cut sharply across the surface of forehead, cheek and chin, and left heavy shadows like those in a roughly blocked-out carving, under brow, nose and lower lip, the two men faced each other for a full half-minute in silence. Then the lieutenant-governor voiced the other's name, hardly above a whisper.

"Spencer Cavendish!"

And that other, echoing the tone, if not the words, replied:

"Barclay!"

A square away, the lights of a hansom winked into the avenue, and the hoof-beats of the horse clanked on the pavement, unaccompanied by any sound from the smoothly trundling, rubber-tired wheels. Barclay stepped to the curb, and, with his stick, hailed the driver. The cab drew in, stopped, and threw the divisions of its apron wide, like two black hands extended in cordial welcome.

The lieutenant-governor turned to his companion. "Get in," he said. "I wish to have a talk with you."

The drive of a mile and more from Bradbury avenue to Barclay's quarters, in the new bachelor apartment-house, "The Rockingham," was accomplished without the exchange of a word. Once, the lieutenant-governor felt his companion shiver, and, dragging a rug from under them, he spread it across their knees. That was the only movement on the part of either. They sat side by side, looking straight before them over the horse's bobbing crupper, until the hansom pulled up sharply before the broad and brilliantly illuminated entrance of "The Rockingham." As they passed in, Cavendish had a passing impression of tiled floors, columns of

green marble, and attendants in tightly-fitting green uniforms with brass buttons. Then an elevator whirled them up to the eighth floor, deposited them in a square hallway, and vanished again, with the little page in charge wrinkling his nose and biting the thumb of his cotton glove.

The lieutenant-governor unlocked the door of his apartment, touched a button which flooded the little hall and the drawing-room beyond with light, and, entering the latter, went directly to a closet in the wall. Unlocking this, he took out a jar of biscuits and a decanter, and, placing them upon the table, turned once more to his companion.

"Put away a couple of those biscuits and a glass of sherry," he said, "and then we'll talk."

"I'm past biscuits," said the other, almost sullenly.

"I'll see to that," replied Barclay. "They are only by way of a starter."

He passed into the hall, as he spoke, and presently Cavendish heard the click of a telephone-receiver slipping from its crotch, and Barclay's voice speaking, to some one below, of a steak, vegetables, salad and coffee. He stepped to the table, devoured two or three of the biscuits ravenously, poured himself a glass of sherry, sipped and then swallowed it, and flung himself down upon a wide divan.

"Have you a cigarette?" he asked, as Barclay reëntered. "I haven't smoked in three days. That's worse than mere hunger, you know."

"I believe you!"

Barclay pushed a silver box across the table, and, seating himself opposite, touched a match to the cigar which he had been about to light at the Rathbawnes' door, and which he still held between his lips.

"Help yourself," he added. "Your supper will be up presently. Meanwhile, shall I fire away, or will you?"

Cavendish let the first smoke from his cigarette curl slowly up his cheek, before replying. In the full light now first resting upon it, his face showed as that of a man approximately Bar-

clay's age, but pinched by want, and deeply lined by dissipation. His under-lids were puffy and discolored, and a dozen heavy creases ran, fan-like, from the corners of his eyes. Hair already turning gray, and an unkempt mustache and beard, completed the picture. His clothes were faded and frayed; no linen was visible, and his boots were cracked and soggy. There was nothing about him to suggest the former estate of gentleman save his hands, which, while thin and tremulous, were clean and well-kept, in singular contrast to the slovenliness of his attire.

"Age before respectability," he said, with the shadow of a smile, in reply to Barclay's question. "I'll go first. It will save your asking questions. We parted in anger, Barclay."

"Let that pass," put in the lieutenant-governor, briefly. "Two years wipes out all scores as petty as was the cause of our quarrel."

"Well, then," continued Cavendish, more easily, "when I left Kenton City, it was with the best intention in the world of making a fresh start, in some place where my story wasn't known. I went to New York. I had a little money, but only a very little, and not the most remote idea of how difficult it is for a man to make his way in a place where he is unknown, particularly if he has no credentials, and is too proud to ask for any from his old associates. Moreover, I had been drinking hard for six months, and there was no such thing as clipping it short all at once. I had an idea of tapering off, and perhaps, if I had found a job, I might have done so. As it was, I climbed up one step, and fell down two; and that went on indefinitely. It wasn't as if I'd had a distinct aim, or anything in my life which made it seem worth living. I didn't half care. I had set my heart on something which I couldn't get, and—well, never mind that. It is all as long ago as the flood! I got work now and again, tried reporting, and teaching, and copying. But each time it was a grade lower, and I stuck to

nothing but the whiskey—except when I had a little more money than usual; then it was absinthe."

He touched his eyes, and then stretched out his hand, with the fingers wide apart and drooping limply, and watched them tremble.

"I haven't seen a mirror in weeks," he went on, "but I know the signs are all there. That's the story. I could string it out for an hour, but it would all be in the same key. I've simply been going down, down, down. I'm what the old judge called me—do you remember when it came out in *The Record*?—I'm a common drunk, Barclay; and I don't think I care. I've been on the point, many a time, of putting an end to it; but I always held out for another drink! Now, even my pride's gone. It stuck to me longer than anything else, but it's taken itself off, at last. I've been feeling, lately, that I'm pretty near the end, and I wanted to see Kenton City again before it came. That's the reason I walked all the way from Pittsburg, and I've been begging on the streets since I got in. I thought nobody would recognize me."

"But I did," said Barclay.

"Yes, and—and——"

"Yes, and *she* did! She saw you this morning, but before she realized fully that it was you, you were gone in the crowd. She was half heart-broken over it, and made me promise to look you up. I was going to do so, when I tumbled against you by chance to-night. You were watching the house?"

"Yes; for the last time. I saw she had recognized me; I knew Kenton City was no place for me. So I was off again to-night. Is she——?"

"She is well and, I am glad to say, happy. We are to be married in the Autumn."

A smile hovered for an instant on Cavendish's lips. "God bless her!" he said, slowly. "I'm glad of it. But don't let's talk of that. She's as far above me as the stars!"

"And as far above me, too, for that matter!" answered Barclay. "Here's

your supper. While you're eating, I'll take my turn at the talk."

A bell-boy arranged the tray on the table, removed the covers, and in a moment the two men were again alone. With a deep sigh of satisfaction, Cavendish drew a chair to the table, and set to work on the steaming dishes before him.

"Jupiter!" he said, with the first mouthful poised on his fork, "you don't know what this means, Barclay, and you can praise God you don't. I won't attempt to thank you. Go on and tell me about yourself."

"I've no intention of doing that, just at present," replied the lieutenant-governor, settling himself more comfortably in his chair. "I want to talk about you. Don't be afraid; I'm not going to preach! But I *am* going to say that, while I understand a great deal of what you've said, the last part is pure rot! You're a bit of a wreck, of course, but it isn't your pride, or your self-respect, or whatever you choose to call it, that's gone—it's only your nerve. Now, you have had your experience, and you are back where you belong, and you have friends, who like you, and who can help you, and who will. I'm in a position to do so, myself, and I don't expect you to make any bones about accepting my assistance and whatever money you need for the moment. It will be a loan, of course, to be repaid when you're on your feet again. We'll have you there in no time. When you've made away with the grub, you can bunk down on that divan for the night, and in the morning I'll tog you out in one of my outfits, and you can set about getting back on *terra firma*. You'll have to shake the drink; that goes without saying."

Cavendish straightened himself suddenly, laid down his knife and fork, and laughed, shortly.

"It sounds well," he said, bitterly; "but you don't understand, Barclay. It's too late! I don't care, and, if I did, I couldn't shake the drink, to save my immortal soul. I'm steady enough for the time being, because

I'm hungry, and because I'm being fed. But I've tried the other game too often. I know what it means. I won't promise you to quit, because I don't want to lie to you. When the craving comes back, I'll go down before it like a row of ten-pins. No, Barclay, it won't do."

"Nonsense, man! Do you want to tell me you're as weak as that?"

"Every bit!" said Cavendish, attacking the steak again.

"Well, I don't believe it, that's all. In the morning, you'll be a different man. I'll give you a bromide when you're ready for bed. You're shaky, as it is, but that's all a matter of nerves. Now, we'll drop the subject, and talk of other things."

It was midnight when they separated. Barclay brought out sheets and blankets for the divan, produced pajamas for his guest, put the bath at his disposal, and mixed a strong dose of bromide for him to take upon retiring.

Half an hour later, when he reentered the drawing-room to see whether Cavendish was in need of anything further, he found him standing by the table in his pajamas, trembling, wide-eyed and very pale.

"What is it?" he asked. "Are you ill?"

"No," answered Cavendish, striving in vain to control the trembling of his lips, "only damnably nervous. Could you—could you give me a drop of brandy, Barclay?"

"Certainly not!" said the lieutenant-governor. "Pull yourself together, man! There's your bromide; take that. It's better than a thousand brandies."

Cavendish turned, lifted the glass, spilling a little as he did so, and swallowed the sedative at a gulp. Then he stretched himself upon the divan, and drew the covers close up about his chin. Presently, from the bedroom, Barclay heard the other breathing deeply and regularly. Soon after, he himself fell into a heavy, dreamless sleep.

He awoke with a start, as the dawn was showing gray through the chinks of his window-curtains, with a vague, uneasy sense of something wrong. He lay listening, every nerve strained taut. From the adjoining room came the sound of Cavendish's breathing, but now it was more raucous, more like groan following groan. The lieutenant-governor strove in vain to put off the foreboding which lay heavy upon him, until, finally, unable to resist the impulse, he arose, slid his feet into slippers, and, going noiselessly into the drawing-room, stepped to the window, and put the curtains softly aside.

What first met his eyes as he turned was the door of his little wine-closet in the wall. It was standing wide open, and about the lock the wood was hacked and hewn away in great splinters. On a chair near-by lay a rough knife, with the blade open and a sliver of wood yet sticking to the point. Then he looked toward the divan. Cavendish was lying face downward upon it, outside the blankets, with his head lolling sharply over the edge. His left arm was extended full-length toward the ground, where his fingers just touched a bottle of French absinthe, overturned upon its side, and uncorked, with the thick, gummy liquid spread from its mouth in a circular pool on the waxed floor.

IV

At nine o'clock, when Barclay passed through his anteroom, with a wink at the boy, a nod to the stenographer, and a word of greeting to his private secretary, and entered his office, he was surprised to find the communicating door open, and to hear the sound of a vaguely familiar voice in the governor's room beyond. In an effort to place the speaker, he hesitated briefly, before advancing to a point which would bring him within range of the governor's eye. Almost immediately, the memory of the convention rushed over him, and he rec-

ognized the voice as that of Michael McGrath.

"And it won't be a strike like other strikes," the man was saying; "not so long as I'm running it. It's going to mean business from the word go! There's been too much shilly-shallying in the strikes I've known anything about, too much talk and too much wasting of union funds. You know what I mean. It isn't enough to tie up a mill, and then hang around on street-corners for two months, waiting for the other side to give in. The only place to hit a man like Rathbawne is in his pocket, and by that I don't mean simply cutting off his income, but chopping into his capital as well. He's got to understand——"

The lieutenant-governor walked over to his desk, laid his hat and stick on a chair, and, before removing his overcoat, began turning over the pile of letters which awaited his attention. As he did so, Governor Abbott's voice broke in suavely upon the other's.

"I deprecate any resort to violence," he said. "You must proceed with discretion, if you expect the state to maintain an attitude of neutrality. Otherwise, the police or the militia——"

"Oh, damn the police and the militia!" broke in McGrath, impatiently. "What's the use——?"

"There is the lieutenant-governor now," interrupted the governor. "Perhaps he has some news for us. Mr. Barclay, will you kindly step in here for a moment?"

McGrath was standing on the opposite side of the governor's table, as Barclay entered the room. He acknowledged the latter's curt nod with an ironical bow, slipped his hands into the pockets of his checked trousers, and stood waiting, with his square head thrust forward, for what was to follow.

"Mr. McGrath has called," continued the governor, "to explain the attitude of the union, in the impending strike at the Rathbawne mills. I've been telling him of our conversation of yesterday afternoon; that, as you were to see Mr. Rathbawne last night, you would probably have something to

report to us in regard to his position. Were you able to persuade him to a more reasonable view of the situation?"

"I have nothing to add, sir, to what I said yesterday," replied Barclay. "I told you then that I had no intention of endeavoring to influence Mr. Rathbawne's judgment."

"He spoke to you about it?"

"Yes."

"And asked your advice?"

"He did."

"And you replied?"

The lieutenant-governor flushed.

"I beg to suggest, sir," he answered, "that this is hardly the time for me to commit myself as to that. I conceive it to be a matter of official privacy. Mr. McGrath——"

"You have my authority to speak, Mr. Barclay," said the governor. "Indeed, I desire it. Since one side knows your views, there is no reason why the other should not be informed as well. Mr. McGrath is the president of the union. It is best that he should know the attitude of the state authorities in this controversy."

"Very well, sir. I advised Mr. Rathbawne, then, to fight the union in the present dispute, to the utmost of his means and ability. I should have counseled him, further, to hold out till he had spent his last cent, and shed his last drop of blood, except that I considered the recommendation to be superfluous. Mr. Rathbawne has his character and his record behind him. There is as little chance of his yielding an inch of ground as if he were standing with his back against the capitol!"

Governor Abbott tipped back his chair, and looked at McGrath.

"That's pretty plain talk," he said. "You see how it is, Mr. McGrath. You'll have to go ahead on your own responsibility, and you mustn't be surprised if the state steps in at the first evidence of disorder."

McGrath arose, flecked some specks of dust from his waistcoat, and walked toward the door, without a word. On the threshold, he turned, looked from the governor to the lieutenant-governor, and back again, and laughed.

Then he went out, closing the door softly behind him.

At the Rathbawne mills, it was usual for a huge whistle to give one long blast at noon, as a signal for the lunch hour. On that day, however, following McGrath's instructions, the single blast was replaced by five short ones in rapid succession, and three minutes later the employees were pouring through half-a-dozen gates into the streets surrounding the mills, in laughing, chattering, excited streams. A majority of the men went directly to a hall in the neighborhood, where McGrath had called a mass-meeting for half-past twelve. A proportion of them crowded into the saloons of the vicinity, where they pounded on the bars, and filled the close, smoke-grayed air with heated discussion. Several of the discharged hands were in evidence, each surrounded by an attentive group, and expounding more or less inflammatory views. The women gathered in gossiping throngs on the sidewalks, laughing and pulling one another about by the arms. The boys played ball and leap-frog, shouting and whistling through their fingers. In brief, the great strike was on; but, for the time being, it was masquerading in the guise of a public holiday.

At one o'clock, the whistle blew again, and a thousand voices whooped a derisive accompaniment, but no one of the vast throng in the streets started toward the mills. Half an hour later, watchmen swung to and bolted the gates, and presently issuing in company from a small, side entrance were received with cheers, handshakes and slaps upon the back. Then the crowd gradually thinned, many going to the already well-filled hall, where McGrath was delivering an address, and others to their homes. A silence descended upon the neighborhood.

At two, Peter Rathbawne, attended by his private secretary, came out of the side entrance and walked slowly away in the direction of his home. He held his head high, and his eyes straight to the front, and paid no atten-

tion to the respectful greetings of the strikers who saluted him, touching their hats. There were many among them whose hearts sank at this attitude in a man who had made it his boast that he knew every hand in his mills by sight, and who, in the past, had had a nod or a friendly word for each and all of them. For the first time, a premonition settled upon them of what this strike, which had been welcomed principally for novelty's sake, might mean. It was the first the Rathbawne mills had ever known. Some of those who saw the face of Peter Rathbawne that afternoon were already hoping that it might be the last.

The lieutenant-governor returned to his apartment for luncheon. Cavendish was still sleeping, as he had left him, and a stalwart negro porter, summoned from the capitol by telephone early that morning, was watching in a chair. Under Barclay's orders, a carpenter had already removed the splintered door of the wine-closet, and an upholsterer had replaced it by a slender brass rod from which swung a velvet curtain. The lieutenant-governor now dismissed the negro, took from his pocket a phial of powerful stimulant, obtained from his physician on his way from the capitol, and, after a brief survey of his surroundings to see that all was in order, went over to the divan, and shook the sleeping man by the shoulder.

"Come, lazy-bones!" he said, with a laugh. "You've slept over twelve hours. That will do—even for a nervous wreck."

Cavendish slowly opened his swollen eyes, looked at him, and then closed them again, with a murmured, "Oh, God!" which was like a groan.

To this, the lieutenant-governor paid no heed. Passing into the bath-room, he turned on the cold water in the tub, mixed the contents of the phial in a glass half-filled with vichy, and then returned, carrying the tumbler in his hand. Cavendish had raised himself on one elbow, and was looking stupidly about the room.

"Here you are," said Barclay,

cheerfully. "Stow this. Your bath's running. By the time you've had it, there'll be some clothes ready for you."

Cavendish gulped down the stimulant, and sat upright.

"Last night—" he faltered.

For the first time in his life, the lieutenant-governor called him by his first name.

"Last night, Spencer," he said, looking him fairly in the eye, "belongs to the past, and is tabooed. I won't hear a word about it. This is to-day. Get up, and we'll set about putting wrong right. You're a man again—don't forget that. And I'm your friend. Don't forget that, either."

His hand rested for an instant on the other's shoulder with a firm pressure, and then he passed into his bedroom, and shut the door.

They had luncheon together in the dining-room of "The Rockingham," and then went up again to Barclay's rooms. At the door, Cavendish came to a halt.

"I can't stand this!" he said.

"You'll have to," replied the lieutenant-governor, "so shut up!"

"You've made a change," said Cavendish, obstinately, pointing to the curtained cupboard.

Barclay's eyes did not follow the gesture.

"So have you!" he answered.

"Now, look here; there are twenty dollars in the waistcoat of that suit, and a letter to Payson, of the *Kenton City Sentinel*. Go down and see him this afternoon, and I think he'll give you a job at reporting, which will fix you up for the present. In another pocket, you'll find a bottle of sodium-bromide tablets. Take two of them every two hours till further notice. In still another pocket, there's a key to these rooms. I'm going to be busy till about ten o'clock, so you'll have to shift for yourself. Make yourself at home, and, if you're awake, I'll see you when I come in."

Taking him suddenly by the shoulders, Barclay twisted him about, facing the chimney-piece, on which stood a

photograph of Natalie Rathbawne, smiling out of a silver frame.

"I'll leave you to talk it out with her," he added, simply.

In the hall, as he passed out, he caught a reflection of Cavendish in a mirror. His hands were resting on the mantel-edge, and he was leaning forward, with his haggard face close to the photograph. Barclay looked at his watch.

"Two o'clock," he said to himself, "and all's well!"

Nine o'clock found the lieutenant-governor again in consultation with Peter Rathbawne, over cordials and cigars. The mill-owner was telling of a visit which he had paid to Governor Abbott that afternoon.

"I went direct to him," he said, "because I knew there was no use in parleying with the lesser officials, who are only his tools. I knew, too, that no satisfactory result would come of appealing to him, but I wanted to give him the chance. All I asked of him was an assurance of proper police protection for the mills, and, if need be, that the militia would be called out in support of order. The outcome was exactly what I expected. Governor Abbott smiled and rubbed his hands, and said: 'All in good time, Mr. Rathbawne, all in good time. When the occasion seems to warrant it, we can discuss these measures.' That means that they are free to blow the mills to kingdom come, before a finger will be raised by the authorities! And they'll do it. Do you think I don't know McGrath?"

"I hope it's not as bad as that, Mr. Rathbawne," said Barclay. "It's not necessary to tell you that I don't trust Governor Abbott, but, at the same time, I can hardly bring myself to believe that he would openly countenance the existence of practical anarchy in the capital city of Alleghenia."

"Well, I can, then!" declared Rathbawne. "I can believe anything of him. I tell you, John, he's as sleek a scoundrel as you'll find outside of the state's prison. He

cares less for Alleghenia than you do for your cigar-ash. The union has bought him, body and soul, and, unless a miracle comes down from heaven, I'm a beaten man!"

Barclay bit his lips without replying. In his heart of hearts, he knew that what the other said was true.

"He'll be impeached, sooner or later," continued the old man, "if there's a spark of decency left in the legislature—which I sometimes doubt. But long before that, John, long before that, I'll be down and out! I would to God you were governor of Alleghenia, my boy. You're the only ray of hope I can see for this state."

"I would to God I were!" echoed Barclay, clenching his fist upon the table. "Sometimes I almost—yes, sometimes I wholly despair! I love this state, Mr. Rathbawne, as I love nothing else in the world, not even Natalie, and you know what it means when I say that. Other men talk of national patriotism, and the flag, and all that, and I understand it, and honor them for it. It may be a fancy of mine, but even before Washington, comes Kenton City, and even before these United States of America, the sovereign state of Alleghenia. I want her to shine foremost in the diadem of stars, to be quoted from Maine to California, and from Oregon to Florida, as a synonym for law and order, truth, integrity and justice. You know how far the dream is from the reality. We're held up to ridicule and contempt as law-breakers, bribe-takers and time-servers. I can't see help on any hand. I don't believe our people are vicious or corrupt—only callous and indifferent. But it all amounts to the same thing in the end. Once, I hoped I should be able to do something—but now, I'm a nonentity, Mr. Rathbawne, as you know, and not only that, but a man who has taken a false step, from which he can never recover. I'm dead, politically—dead!

"It's selfish of me to be fretting about such things, however," he added,

after a little pause, "when all your interests are at stake. Let's come back to the strike."

"There's not much more to say," replied Rathbawne, shaking his head. "All I can do is to keep my mouth shut, await developments, and trust in a Providence which it takes a good bit of faith to believe hasn't deserted the state of Alleghenia, for good and all. It isn't for my own sake alone, John, that I pray the union will give in before they begin to think of violence."

They were rising from the table, when Natalie hurried in. "You're wanted at the telephone, dad," she said. "It's the office of *The Sentinel*. I hope it's no bad news, dad, dear," she added, touching his cheek as he passed her.

When they were alone, she turned to Barclay.

"Now, this is what it is to be engaged to the lieutenant-governor!" she said. "Do you know, I haven't had a chance to see you alone for exactly twenty-seven hours and eight minutes?"

"Don't scold me," answered Barclay, "or, by Jove, you sha'n't hear a word of what I have to tell you!"

"You can spare yourself the trouble, my lord," retorted Natalie. "I know already what it is. You've found him!"

"How did you know?"

"I didn't. But I knew that I asked you to do it. The inference is as plain as a pikestaff."

"Well, you're right; I have. He's been at my rooms since last night. He was frightfully shaky and utterly despondent, but he's taking a sedative which will settle his nerves, and I've no doubt a few days of good food and plenty of sleep will bring him around to his old form."

"Boy dear! And you're taking care of him?"

"I'm doing my best, Flower Face. But don't let's talk about it till I can report more definite progress."

He slipped his arm around her, and together they went out across the wide hall, toward the drawing-room. Rathbawne was standing at the tele-

phone under the stairway, but, as they appeared, he replaced the receiver, and stepped forward into the light of the chandelier. There they both halted, shocked into speechlessness by the look on his face. The past five minutes seemed to have added ten years to his age. His cheeks were white and drawn, and he groped before him, with his hands, as if he had been suddenly stricken blind. As he came close to them, he lifted his head, and looked first at his daughter and then at Barclay, without seeming to recognize them.

"Dad! What is it?" said the girl, in a voice just above a whisper.

Rathbawne raised his hand, and pushed back the hair from his forehead.

"A message from Payson, of *The Sentinel*," he mumbled. "There is a fire—a fire on Charles street—near the mills—one of my shops. Some one in the crowd flung a torch on the roof. There is a great throng—a throng of strikers—watching, cheering the flames, hissing the firemen! They've begun early; and this is only the beginning!"

He stumbled forward, and would have fallen, but that his daughter caught him. Barclay thought he would remember to his dying day how her arms gleamed, white and slender, against the black of her father's coat.

The hush that followed was stirred presently by Rathbawne's sobs, and the low, soothing tones of Natalie, murmuring against his ear. But, in the lieutenant-governor's imagination, another sound mingled with these two—the voice of Michael McGrath, as he had heard it that morning, through the open door leading into Governor Abbott's room:

"It won't be a strike like other strikes, not so long as I'm running it, that is. It's going to mean business from the word go!"

V

ONE spotted peach will contaminate a whole basket; one drop of ink will

cloud a full glass of clear water. It was so in the case of the strikers at the Rathbawne mills. Their unwonted idleness, the long succession of empty hours, already among the more improvident the preliminary pressure of privation's teeth—all these made them easy prey for the sophistries of men like McGrath and his associates. At first, they laughed at the arraignments of Peter Rathbawne as a plutocrat, a slave-master and an oppressor of the poor, knowing better in their hearts. But the memory of past kindness is too apt to be the most fleeting of human impressions. On the one side, the gates of the Rathbawne mills remained obstinately closed, and, although Rathbawne himself manifested no intention of resorting to the intolerable importation of "scab" labor, he persisted in his refusal to treat with the union, so long as the discharge of the fifteen men remained a subject proposed for debate. On the other hand, the denunciations of McGrath and the other union orators were constant, unavoidable and sufficiently plausible to produce an impression, and linger in the mind.

After the burning of Mr. Rathbawne's shop, on the first night of the strike, ensued a week of comparative quiet. The outrage had been flagrant; the source, if not the very author, of it was known, and the police did—nothing. For three days, the press of Kenton City blazed with indignation, excepting only *The Record*, which openly favored the strikers, and then all the papers alike suddenly ceased to refer to the incident. For, while McGrath did not believe in wasting the funds of the union, he was well aware that a dollar, as well as a stitch, in time saves nine.

But, shortly, the strain began to tell upon the four thousand unemployed sets of nerves around the Rathbawne mills. Meetings became more frequent and more turbulent, drinking and disorder were observably on the increase, and, at the end of eight days, one of the gates of the

mills was broken down, and several hundred men and boys paraded around shop after shop, breaking windows and singing ribald songs. It was not a very serious demonstration in itself. Its ominous feature lay in the fact that the police made no attempt to check it.

Two nights later, another building belonging to Mr. Rathbawne, situated only a block from the mills, was burned in the same manner as the first, watched by an enormous crowd of strikers, who applauded each fresh burst of flame, as if the fire had been a circus or a play. Still there was no move on the part of the police.

Then it was that the business men of Kenton City sat up in their office-chairs, and began to think. Vaguely, they had known that the state of Alleghenia was rotten, but the fact had never been brought so directly to their attention before. If it was possible for disorder to go to such extremes in the very streets of Kenton City, without fear of interference or rebuke, then no man's property was safe. A citizens' committee, composed of the presidents of two insurance companies and Colonel Broadcastle, was appointed to wait upon the mayor with a protest. But the mayor, as was to be expected, referred them to the governor, and so to the governor they went.

Barclay was present at the interview. For reasons best known to himself, Governor Abbott had kept his subordinate well to the fore in all matters relating to the strike, since their conversation in the presence of Michael McGrath.

Colonel Broadcastle acted as spokesman for the citizens' committee. It was not his custom to mince matters when an occasion demanded candor, and, so soon as he had introduced his fellow-members, he came directly to the point.

"Governor Abbott," he said, in his curt, dry voice, "these gentlemen and myself form a committee appointed by a meeting of the business men of Kenton City, to protest against the state of

affairs now existing in connection with the strike at the Rathbawne mills. It is only generous to presume that other matters have diverted your attention from an appreciation of these conditions. The situation is without parallel in the annals of Alleghenia. Disorder is rampant, and destruction of property is freely indulged in by the strikers, without any apparent fear of molestation. Despite the fact that there is a large police force, there is no effort to check these operations. The sole reply of Chief Pendle, to the protests of those interested in the promotion of law and order, has been that he will not suffer any outside interference in the control of his department—which, in view of his responsibility to the public, can only be regarded as sheer and intolerable insolence! An appeal to Mayor Goadby has elicited the response that the whole matter lies in the governor's hands."

The colonel paused. The governor, leaning back in his chair and fingering a pencil, smiled slightly and nodded his head.

"Continue," he said; "continue, Colonel Broadcastle."

"It is the sense of the law-abiding element of Kenton City," went on the colonel, flushing at the condescension of the governor's tone, "that the limit of endurance has been reached. If, wilfully or otherwise, the police do not act, my regiment is prepared to take their place. I have already placed it at the service of the adjutant-general. His reply, like the mayor's, was to refer me to you for orders. I am here to receive them, sir."

"Your offer is appreciated," said the governor, suavely; "but, for the moment, the state has no need of your regiment, Colonel Broadcastle. Ordering out the militia is no light matter, sir."

"The welfare of the municipality, if not of the commonwealth," replied Colonel Broadcastle, angrily, "demands that an immediate stop be put to this lawlessness. We are dealing with extremities, sir."

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judge of what the commonwealth's welfare is," retorted the governor. "Whatever lawlessness exists—and I think you have grossly exaggerated its extent, Colonel Broadcastle—is due to the selfish obstinacy of one man. In my opinion, Mr. Rathbawne is entirely in the wrong. If his property suffers at the hands of the strikers, he has only himself to thank."

"It is not a question of Mr. Rathbawne, nor of any other individual," said Colonel Broadcastle, "but of the integrity of the state of Alleghenia!"

"The integrity of the state of Alleghenia," answered the governor, drily, "has been intrusted, by the vote of her citizens, to me as chief executive."

"An action," exclaimed the colonel, "which I venture to predict the citizens of Alleghenia will have reason to repent!"

Governor Abbott rose abruptly to his feet.

"This interview is at an end, Colonel Broadcastle," he said, bringing down his fist with a thud upon the table. "I take exception to your remarks from first to last. I consider myself fully competent to deal with the situation, and I shall do so at my own time and in my own way. If Mr. Peter Rathbawne supposes that he can defy reason and justice at will, and that the state of Alleghenia is going to support him, he is grossly and fatally mistaken. Gentlemen, I have the honor to bid you good day!"

For a full minute the two men stood facing each other, without speaking. It was observable that the eyes of neither flinched.

"It is my earnest hope, Governor Abbott," said the colonel, slowly, "to see you impeached by a righteously indignant community and committed for a term of years to the state's prison at Mowberly, for rank malfeasance in office!"

The governor shrugged his shoulders. "Your record and your position protect you, Colonel Broadcastle," he said, with something of his habitual suavity. "Will you have the goodness to retire?"

As the citizens' committee left the room, the lieutenant-governor turned on his heel, passed into his office, and closed the door.

For a long time, he sat motionless at his desk, with his temples in his hands, staring at a frame on the opposite wall which contained the emblazoned arms of Alleghenia. These were a circular shield, supported by two nude figures of young men representing Art and Labor, and surmounted by a hand holding even balances. Underneath, in bold lettering, were the words, "*Justitia, Lex, Integritas.*"

Much to Barclay's satisfaction, Cavendish had obtained his appointment as a reporter on the staff of *The Sentinel*. A week had produced a vast change in his manner and appearance. His complexion had cleared, his eye brightened. He held himself straighter, with his shoulders thrown back and his head up. He had taken a small room in a boarding-house not far from "The Rockingham," and, for two days, Barclay had not seen him. On the evening following the committee's interview with Governor Abbott, however, he called, as the lieutenant-governor was dressing for dinner.

"I was hoping to find you," he said, dragging a chair to the door of the bedroom, where he could see Barclay struggling with a refractory white tie. "I'm getting on famously, and I wanted you to know it."

"That's right!" said Barclay, scowling into the mirror. "I knew you would. When a man gets into the condition you were in a week ago, there's no such thing as making him believe he can ever pull out. You talked like an ass that first night, Spencer."

"And acted like a blackguard! I suppose you will allow me to refer to that, now?"

"Now less than ever. As I've told you already, it belongs to the past. You're a man again. When are you going to call on the Rathbawnes?"

"Not till this strike trouble is over,

I think. They have all they can attend to at present, without being bothered by reformed drunkards. By the way, I'm to take up the strike to-morrow for *The Sentinel*."

"Then I hope you'll have the courage to roast the scoundrels who are responsible for all this," exclaimed the lieutenant-governor, wrathfully; "McGrath and his associates, I mean. I'm sick and tired of a press whose venality is self-evident, of officials who have been bought like chattels, of a state of affairs, in general, so infamous that it surpasses expression!"

"It's a curious thing," said Cavendish, "that I didn't know, till yesterday, you were lieutenant-governor. Some one in the office asked me if I knew you, and I said—I said, that I used to, but that we hadn't exchanged a word in two years!"

"Why?" demanded Barclay, wheeling upon him, abruptly. "Why did you say that?"

"Because, John Barclay, there is likely to come a time when you won't care to acknowledge that you know me. Oh, wait!" he added, as the lieutenant-governor held up his hand in protest. "Hear me out. You say I talked like an ass that first night. Perhaps; but the fact remains that I've been a drunkard and that I'm bound to be one again. I've been fighting against temptation for a week, and I've grounded it, so far. But you remember the chap with whom old Hercules wrestled? Every time he touched earth, his strength was multiplied. That's the way with drink. I can throw the temptation, but every time I do so it rises, stronger many-fold. Sooner or later, I've got to give in. I know it, as I know I'm sitting here. I'm doing my best now, because, in the future, when the wrong that you've righted goes wrong again, I want you to remember that I made the effort, for you—and for her! But I'm a doomed man. It was born in me. And the next time I drop, it will be for good and all. I shall never make another effort to conquer the inevitable. If I can't do it now,

with the incentive of your help and her interest, surely I can never do it! I've fought, I've struggled, I've even prayed. It's all useless."

He pointed significantly to the curtain, which hung where the door of the wine-closet had been.

"As I did that night," he continued, "I shall do again. It's insanity, nothing more nor less. It lurks at the back of my mind, always—always—and then, suddenly, it comes forward with a rush, and I might as well try to check the north wind or the incoming tide. I feel it tingling in my finger-tips, scorching my throat, tearing at my brain. I swear I won't give in, and in the very act of swearing so, I get up and go out to meet it. I could break down iron doors to get at the drink when it calls to me. And, though I seem to be going straight enough now, the moment is coming when it *will* call, and when I shall obey! Then you won't want to think you've ever known me, John Barclay, and, in the midst of my damnation, it will be a drop of cold water on my tongue to know that I've left you a loop-hole through which you can escape the necessity of acknowledging that you ever have! So far, no one but 'The Rockingham' people and Payson, and—and *she*—knows of our relationship. 'The Rockingham' people don't even know my name. Payson won't speak, and *she* certainly won't! When proof of any intimacy is wanted, it won't be forthcoming."

"What rot is this you're talking?" demanded the lieutenant-governor. "Chuck it, will you? You're as good a man as the next one, you low-down pessimist, you! If you go back on me now—and on her—and, what's worse, on yourself, why, I give you up, that's all!"

"Exactly," replied Cavendish. "That's just what I said!"

"Your responsibility—" began Barclay.

"And yours!" broke in Cavendish. "I'm—nothing! You are the lieutenant-governor—who is spoken of, if

you care to know it, in the offices of *The Sentinel*, as the only honest official in the state of Alleghenia. You mustn't tie up to me, or I to you. Do you know that the law-abiding element looks to you as a kind of Messiah? Do you know that you are the dawn of honor and integrity which lies behind the present cloud of lawlessness and anarchy? I tell you, John, that your future is such as might nerve a defeated Napoleon to renewed endeavor. In you lies the salvation of the state!"

"I wish I could believe you," answered the lieutenant-governor. "God knows I'd give my right hand, if I thought its loss could benefit the commonwealth. But I'm as helpless as a babe unborn, in the present emergency. You see how things are going. One might as well, and with equal hope of success, appeal to McGrath himself as to Governor Abbott. There's no getting around it, Spencer; it's a declaration of anarchy, pure and simple, with the seal of Alleghenia at the bottom of the document. Iniquitous wrong is being done, not only to Mr. Rathbawne, in refusing him the protection of the law, but to the cause of the strikers themselves. Nothing can possibly be gained for the benefit of the many by the violence of the few. It can end only in one way—by the interposition of the federal troops. Before this is over, we shall see people shot down like rats in the streets of Kenton City!"

"All's well that ends well," said Cavendish. "Provided that order is finally restored——"

"But what credit is it," broke in Barclay, "to the state of Alleghenia to have her law-breakers suppressed by the national government? Don't you see that it would be only a final proof that she is too incompetent or too indifferent to do it herself? From the point of view of the state's good name, I doubt which is worse—her present attitude, or the interference of federal force."

"Will it come to the latter, in any event?"

"Undoubtedly. They have already tried to prevent the delivery of Mr. Rathbawne's mail, both at the mills and at his house. You know what that means, don't you? One carrier interfered with in the performance of his duty is sufficient excuse for mobilizing a brigade."

"But the governor——"

Barclay came forward, laid his hand on Cavendish's shoulder, and looked down at him, slowly nodding his head.

"The governor of Alleghenia is a dyed-in-the-wool scoundrel, my good sir," he said. "It is his manifest duty to enforce the law rigidly and at once, and, if the police of Kenton City cannot, or will not, assist him, to summon the militia to his aid. In that way only can the honor of Alleghenia be saved. And that is what Elijah Abbott will never do. There is anarchy, open and flagrant, in the streets of Kenton City; there is anarchy, silent and sneering, in the governor's chair. God save the state!"

VI

It was during the seventh week of the strike at the Rathbawne mills that the *Kenton City Record* made its long-remembered attack on Lieutenant-Governor Barclay. The arraignment was one unparalleled for venom, even in the columns of that most notoriously scurrilous journal, in the state of Alleghenia, and, withal, there was about it a devilish ingenuity, a distortion of facts so slight as to defy refutation, and so plausible as to carry conviction. It was the last blow in the long series of discouragements which Barclay had suffered since his inauguration, and, for the moment, he was completely unmanned.

He was at no loss, however, to trace the source from which the ingeniously perverted facts had been obtained. Not even McGrath, with his intimate knowledge of all that went forward at the capitol, could have supplied information so detailed. The hand of Elijah Abbott was traceable in every line of the attack. Their conversation,

on the afternoon when he had first spoken to Barclay of the impending strike, was reproduced almost word for word, as well as that on the occasion when McGrath had been present; and therefrom *The Record* went on to prove that not even Peter Rathbawne, with all his obstinacy, all his blindness to the welfare of his employees, was responsible for their present destitution in the same sense as was the lieutenant-governor, who might have avoided the strike by a conciliatory word, and who, instead, had advised Mr. Rathbawne to fight the working-people until the last cent of their money should be exhausted and the last drop of their blood should be shed.

"Incompetency," said the article, "is what we long since learned to expect from John Hamilton Barclay. Gross neglect of public duty, flagrant callousness to responsibility, contemptuous indifference to the interests of the citizens whose votes placed him where he is—all these have been part and parcel of his attitude since the unfortunate moment of his election. But, even in him, we had not looked for the incredible spectacle of a public official deliberately precipitating the incalculable distress which has followed in the wake of the strike at the Rathbawne mills. Overburdened with the cares of office, in a single instance the governor of Alleghenia turned over a question of vital significance to the lieutenant from whom he had every reason to expect compliance and support. Even so, he was careful to point out a line of action by which the impending calamity might readily have been avoided. And what was the result? Not only in total disregard of plain duty, but in direct disobedience of the orders of his superior, the lieutenant-governor of Alleghenia threw his influence into the scale to outweigh law and order, and brought about the deplorable destitution now facing the families of four thousand martyrs to principle. When men are driven to desperation, when women turn to shame in order to maintain life, when children are heard crying in our

streets for bread, to whom shall we point as the author of it all? To Peter Rathbawne, a poor, doddering old man, barely responsible now, if rumor is to be believed, for what he does? No! to John Hamilton Barclay, lieutenant-governor of Alleghenia!"

This, and much more in the same strain, while passed over as sensational bombast by the better element, did not fail of its effect upon the strikers. A mass-meeting, held that morning, denounced Barclay in a set of resolutions, as a traitor to his office and as the avowed enemy of labor, and demanded his impeachment, on the ground of neglect of duty. During the day, half a score of threatening letters came to his office. But what hurt him most, though he almost smiled at his own sensitiveness, was that the doormen and porters at the capitol greeted his morning nod with a stare, and even the little office-boy, bending low over his table in the anteroom, did not look up for the customary wink; for his mother was a trimmer at the Rathbawne mills.

Once in his office, the lieutenant-governor found it impossible to concentrate his mind upon the work before him. Sentence after sentence, the words of his arraignment marched through his mind, as he sat with his elbows on the desk and his chin in his doubled fists. A single reading seemed to have stamped them indelibly and forever upon his memory. Baffled by conflicting reflections, he began, for the first time, to doubt whether his had been the course of conscience, or merely that of pride and perversity. Was not *The Record* right, perhaps, after all? If it was true that the strike was driving men to crime and women to the streets—and if it was not, as yet, true, it soon must be—who, indeed, was to blame, if not he himself, who had said, "Fight them!" when he might have kept peace by a word?

Suddenly, the lieutenant-governor rose and, crossing the room to where the arms of Alleghenia hung upon the wall, took down the frame, placing it,

face up, upon the table; then he bent down and studied it intently. The beautifully executed nude figures of Art and Labor stared steadfastly back at him, their muscular hands grasping the circular shield, strength and endurance in every line of their necks, shoulders, and thighs, purity and purpose in their blue eyes and square-cut jaws. He was as motionless as they, for fully five minutes. Presently, his finger moved slowly across the frame, and he said, quite softly:

"*Justitia, Lex, Integritas.*"

Then he looked up, straight before him, out of the open window, where an encircling wistaria was dotted with minute sprouts of green, and up at the clear, wide sky.

"I'm right!" he said, aloud. "I'm right!"

At five that afternoon, Spencer Cavendish set out upon the most unpleasant assignment which had ever fallen to his lot. When Payson had told him that he was to procure an interview with Peter Rathbawne for *The Sentinel*, with a special eye to the mill-owner's failing health, as reported in the morning's *Record*, he had shrunk back instinctively from a task so distasteful, and was on the point of refusing. But two considerations checked this impulse. If the thing were to be done at all, he thought, surely it had better be the work of one friendly to the Rathbawnes, and with their interests at heart, rather than that of an outsider, with it in his power to hurt them beyond expression. The argument was plausible, but behind its logic, at the back of Cavendish's brain, there lay another reason, without which the first had been insufficient to persuade him. He wished to see Natalie again—to meet her under the shield of some compatible excuse, so that he should not seem to have sought her of his own will. He was thirsty for a word from her, thirsty with the pitiable thirst of the shipwrecked sailor who knows a swallow of salt water will but increase his torture, yet craves it, none the less.

Long since, he had forfeited his right to her regard—no sophistry could blind him to that. Moreover, the ocean of degradation not only lay behind him; it lay in front, as well. It was as he had told Barclay. He stood upon an island, not the mainland, of redemption, and another plunge was inevitable.

What he expected to gain by a word with Natalie Rathbawne, Cavendish himself could hardly have told. At most, he was conscious of a faint hope that in some turn or twist of the conversation he might have a chance of thanking her, of telling her that he rejoiced in her happiness, and of bidding her good-bye. For, paramount in his mind, lay the thought of his approaching downfall, sure, utter and final. He did not attempt to deceive himself. He knew what was coming; it had come before.

When Cavendish had sent in his card, a servant showed him through the library into the conservatory. Here Peter Rathbawne was seated in a deep, rattan chair, watching his daughter, who stood at his side, tossing bread crumbs to the goldfish in the circular central pool. They both turned at the sound of his footsteps, and Natalie held out her hand.

"So you've come at last!" she said. "I should think it was quite time. Dad, you remember Mr. Cavendish, don't you?"

"Yes," answered her father; "oh, yes."

Rathbawne's voice was without life, his face almost wholly devoid of expression. Though he glanced at Cavendish, it was with the blank stare of a delirious person whose attention is unconsciously caught by an unusual noise, rather than with any evidence of direct interest, and he took no further part in the conversation; indeed, he seemed not to realize that his companions were speaking. When he had answered his daughter's question and looked at Cavendish, he leaned back in his chair, and wearily closed his eyes.

"He is very much changed since

you saw him," said the girl, in a lower tone, turning again to the pool, "and it has all come about in the past six weeks. The strike has had a most curious, a most pathetic effect upon him. Even the doctor is at a loss to account for it. I think that I am, perhaps, the only one who really understands. He has always been so proud of his mills and of his people, so loyal to them, so like a father to them, one and all, that to have them turn against him like this, and, what is worse, get to drinking and rioting, has almost broken his heart. The doctor says only one thing can save him, and that is to see the mills going again, and the people happy and prosperous, as they were before. And who knows when that will be? For, feeble and broken as he is, he will never give in to the union; of that I'm sure."

"I'm very sorry," said Cavendish, softly. One look at Rathbawne had been enough to show him that the interview for which he had been sent was an impossibility. One look at Natalie sufficed to banish from his mind every thought, save that of her pitiful pallor and the pathetic quiver of her lips.

"I had no idea it was as bad as this," he continued. "Can't anything be done? You are far from being in good shape yourself, Miss Rathbawne."

"Tired and dispirited, that's all," she answered, trying to smile. "And I fear nothing can be done, so long as our fate lies in Governor Abbott's hands. There's no use harping on that, though. You know as well as I what we have to expect from him. Did you see the attack on Mr. Barclay this morning?"

"An infamous libel!" exclaimed Cavendish, hotly.

Miss Rathbawne crumbled the bread between her fingers, and resumed her feeding of the gold-fish.

"You must know that I am the last person in the world to need that assurance," she said, slowly. "It is only another thread in all the hideous tissue of injustice and iniquity which

has been wrapped about us like a pall. What a shame, is it not? that such a man as he should be powerless to do the work I think God intended for him! And what a shame that Alleghonia, needing his clear head and his strong arm and his loyal heart, as she does in this hour of emergency, should be only sneering at him as a coward and a cad!"

"I can't believe," answered Cavendish, "that the venom of *The Record* is to be taken as the sentiment of the state. There must be many, there must be a majority, of Alleghenians who know, as we know, that no better man breathes than John Barclay."

"Thank you," said the girl, simply; and there was a long pause.

In the open spaces of water between the lily-pads, the fat, indolent gold-fish mouthed at the crumbs, stirring the silence with little, sucking sounds, and sending tiny ripples widening slowly on all sides. One alone, a dingy yellow in color, moped apart from his fellows, and took no interest in the banquet.

"That one's a cynic," said Miss Rathbawne, presently. "My subtlest cajoleries never win him from that attitude of sneering contempt. The others get all the titbits, and he doesn't seem to care. He isn't even ornamental; he's in a class by himself. I call him Diogenes, and I've been thinking of buying him a tub, where he can sulk in solitary grandeur, to his heart's content."

"Perhaps not altogether in a class by himself," said Cavendish. "There are others, you know, who make no use of their opportunities, and who can never be anything but ugly and useless, while their fellows are getting all the good things of life and enjoying them and giving pleasure of one kind or another, into the bargain."

Something in his tone caused Miss Rathbawne to look at him suddenly.

"I'm not enough of a pessimist to think that," she answered, firmly. "If what you say is so, then all that's wanting is the opportunity. I don't believe even the humblest of God's creatures goes out of life without hav-

ing been, at one time or another, an influence for good. I have hopes, even of Diogenes. Some day, there will be an ugly little bug, or a scrap of refuse, that mars the beauty of my fountain, and Diogenes will eat it, and, perhaps, die of indigestion, as a martyr to principle!"

The silence which followed her words was broken by a hoarse sob from Mr. Rathbawne, and, turning, they saw that his head had fallen back against the chair, with his eyes, wide and vacant, staring at the ceiling, and the breath coming in short, thick gasps from between his parted lips. In an instant, Natalie was on her knees by his side, with her arms about him.

"Don't be frightened," she said, looking up at Cavendish with a brave little smile. "It's his heart. He has had these attacks frequently of late. Will you get me the whiskey decanter and a glass? You'll find them in the dining-room—on the sideboard—to the left."

Decanter in hand, Cavendish stood watching her, as she tenderly poured a little of the raw spirit between her father's lips. The effect was almost instantaneous. Rathbawne choked, swallowed the restorative, and, presently, raised his head and looked at her, patting her hand tremulously with his own. They were so absorbed in each other that neither noted a sudden, strange transformation in Cavendish's expression. From the wide-mouthed decanter in his hand, the faint, acrid odor of Peter Rathbawne's fine old Scotch whiskey crept upward, stung his nostrils, and, of a sudden, set him all of a quiver, like a startled animal. The smell was almost that of pure alcohol; but he knew it for something which belonged to, and was part of, him. For weeks, he had avoided it. Now, it assailed him like the ancient foe of Hercules, of whom he had spoken to Barclay, that Geryon whose strength was multiplied a thousandfold for every time his opponent trod him under foot.

"If you were to leave us alone——"

At the suggestion, Cavendish bowed

and went slowly back toward the dining-room. Once out of sight, he paused, glanced back over his shoulder, and then, abruptly supporting himself with one hand against the lintel of the doorway, raised the decanter in the other to his lips, and drank.

VII

THE day had been deliciously warm and still, one of those eloquent heralds of Spring that are touched with a peculiar beauty rivaling her own. As Cavendish came out of the Rathbawne residence, Bradbury avenue was splashed with huge blotches of dazzling yellow, where the light of the westwardly sun poured between the houses, and was spilled upon the smooth pavement. The man choked, slightly, at the after-taste of the raw whiskey he had just swallowed, but, almost immediately, he smiled.

"I knew it would come," he said to himself, as he turned out into the avenue, "and here it is. I'm not surprised; I'm glad, God help me—I'm glad!"

His mouth was watering, and he felt every inch of the stimulant's progress through his veins, warming him with its familiar glow. When he had left the conservatory, he had been trembling, pitifully. Now, he was calm, and as steady as if his nerves had been cords of steel. Responsibility, resolution, remorse—they had fallen from him like so many discarded garments. He was sharply alive to the pleasure of the moment, keenly appreciative of the sunlight, the soft air, the laughter of the children romping in the streets. Of a singular languor that had been wont to come over him toward the close of each busy day of the past six weeks, there was now no hint. He walked rapidly, with his shoulders thrown back, and his chin well-elevated, but his course was not in the direction of his home, nor yet in that of *The Sentinel* office. Instinctively, he had turned toward that part of the city where

were the large restaurants, the play-houses and the more pretentious saloons.

At a corner, he wheeled abruptly into a saloon, and, seating himself at a small table, called for an absinthe. The place was already lighted, and each glass in the pyramids behind the bar twinkled with a tiny, brilliant reflection of the nearest incandescent globes. The air was faintly redolent of lemon and the mingled odors of many liquors. To Cavendish, it was all very familiar and all very pleasant. Again he told himself that he was glad—glad that the restraint he had been exercising was at an end. He was free, he thought, free to accomplish his own inevitable damnation. He had no patience for the tedious operation of dripping the water into his absinthe over a lump of sugar. He ordered gum, and, stirring the two rapidly together, filled the glass to the brim from a little pitcher at his side. Then he drank, slowly but steadily, barely touching the glass to the table between his sips.

Presently, he was conscious of a slight numbness at his wrists, a barely perceptible tingling in his knees and knuckles. His heart was fluttering, and his temples pulsed pleasantly. He glanced toward the glittering pyramids of glasses, and, for a fraction of a second, they seemed to shift in unison a foot to the right, returning immediately to their original position with a jerk. Then he rose and went toward the door, catching sight of his face in a mirror as he passed. It was very pale, and he crinkled his nose at it, derisively, and then smiled at the whimsical oddity of his reflected expression. On the threshold, he paused, looking toward the west, which blazed with the red and saffron of the departed sun.

"Oof!" he said, with a downward tug at his waistcoat. "It comes quickly. That's what it is to be out of practice."

He dined alone in a corner of an unfrequented restaurant, eating little, but drinking steadily, absinthe at

first, then whiskey, four half-goblets of it, barely diluted with water. Finally, he found himself once more in the streets, now brilliantly lighted, going on and on without purpose, save when the blazing, colored glass of a saloon swerved him from his path.

He knew that he was walking steadily, avoiding obstacles as if by instinct, stepping from and on to curbs without an actual perception of them. Faces swam past him, staring. Men, particularly those at the bars he leaned against, were talking loudly, but, as it seemed to him, brilliantly. He often smiled involuntarily, and sometimes spoke to one of them, drank with him, and presently was left alone again, walking on and on. Occasionally, a white-faced clock bulged at him out of the night, and he noticed that time was galloping.

It was close upon one when he found himself in a quarter which his recent employment had made familiar—the neighborhood of the Rathbawne mills. Here, suddenly, his mind emerged from a mist, and every detail of his surroundings stood out, sharp and clear-cut. The street was insufficiently illuminated, but the light of a full moon cut across the buildings on one side, halfway between roof and sidewalk. Cavendish perceived, with a kind of dull surprise, that the pavements were thronged, and that almost every window framed a figure or two. A hoarse murmur pulsed the air, and his quickened ear was greeted on every side by foul jests and grumbled oaths, broken now and again by drunken imprecations, scuffles, or the shrill invective of women invisible in the throng. Once, a girl touched his arm, and he found her face close to his, thin, haggard and imploring. He shook her off, and turned unsteadily into the doorway of a saloon, stumbling, as he did so, over a little boy crying on the step.

Inside, the air was reeking with rank smoke and the fumes of stale beer. The floor was strewn with sawdust streaked and circled by shuffling feet, the mirror backing the bar

was covered with soiled gauze dotted with tawdry roses, and an indescribable dinginess seemed to have laid its sordid fingers on all the fittings.

The room was crowded, nevertheless—crowded not only with the men themselves, but, to the stifling point, with their voices and their gestures and the spirit of their unrest and discontent.

Cavendish, leaning against the end of the bar, looked wearily down the line of flushed faces, and backward at the disputing groups which rocked and swayed, as the men argued and swore, grasping the lapels of one another's coats, and spilling the liquor from their glasses as they gesticulated. He was wholly sober now. It was the stage of dissipation which experience had taught him to dread the most—the emergence from dulled sensibility into a nervous tension upon which stimulant had no apparent effect. He was trembling again, too, and his face, as he saw it in the mirror through the clouding gauze, was as that of a stranger, a stranger of whom he was afraid.

He swallowed the whiskey he had ordered, and, supporting himself by the bar, swung back and gave his attention to what the men about him were saying. It did not need his sharpened perception to appreciate the fact that he was in the thick of the worst element of the Rathbawne strikers, or that the situation was a crisis. What little restraint had characterized the earlier stages of the strike was now, most evidently, at an end. Starvation was no longer a possibility, violence no more a mere threat. The men raved like wild creatures against Rathbawne and John Barclay, recounting, maudlinly, the destitution of their families, and, anon, flaming forth into cries for vengeance.

How long the babel lasted, Cavendish could not have said. Long since, the doors had been closed, and the lights half-lowered, in mock deference to a supposedly vigilant police, when suddenly a hush fell upon the

assemblage. A side door had opened, and Michael McGrath stood in the midst of his followers, with his arms folded and a thin smile upon his lips. There was not a whisper as he began to speak. The men leaned toward him breathlessly, their mouths open, their eyes staring glassily out of their sodden faces.

"And how long is *this* going to go on?" demanded their leader, with a sneer. "Talk—talk—talk! That's always the way, and nothing done, after all. Well, there's been about enough of it, and that's flat. You've been living on the union, and I suppose you think you can go on living on it till hell freezes over. Now, listen to me! When the strike began, we had plenty of funds, and more came to us from the central federation. The funds are gone, d'you hear? and the federation is asking what we mean to do. There is six hundred and odd dollars in the treasury. No need to tell you how far that much will go, is there? Not one day! And with all your talk, you've everything your own way, if only you knew it—a police that doesn't dare lift a finger against you, and a governor that won't budge an inch till I give the word! Well, to-morrow, I give the word, understand me? To-morrow, I throw you over, and you can get out of this the best way you can. I'm sick of your talk. I'm sick of your doing nothing. Your daughters are on the streets, your wives and your children are starving, and *you*—by heaven! *you* are boozing in a bar till daylight, and talking! So that's enough. To-morrow, the strike's at an end. To-morrow, the governor comes down on you like ten thousand of brick! And I'm the man that gives the word; unless—"

He paused and cast a keen glance at the faces surrounding him. His last words had been greeted by a low growl.

"—unless," he continued, "you know your business, and make a move that's worth the name."

The hush of attention deepened into the leaden silence of expectancy.

"There are two men who must be put out of the way," said McGrath, slowly, "and that before another midnight. I don't care how it's done, but done it must be, for the sake of example. It's easy enough to manage it, as things are. There'll be a howl, but we have the authorities fixed. And those two men must go!"

In the tense silence which followed, a man's voice whispered two words hoarsely:

"Mr. Rathbawne!"

"Aye, Mr. Rathbawne!" echoed McGrath, flashing into that passionate manner of his which carried all before it. "Mr. Rathbawne, who's starving you! Mr. Rathbawne, who's making your sons drunkards! Mr. Rathbawne, who's debauching your daughters! Mr. Rathbawne, who's killing your wives by inches! Mr. Rathbawne, and Mr. John Hamilton Barclay, lieutenant-governor of Alleghenia!"

For a moment, it seemed as if he would be swept off his feet by a torrent of enthusiasm. The men crowded about him, slapping him upon the shoulders, shouting their approval, reaching for his hand. One brandished a revolver under his nose, with a shrill cry of, "This'll do it, Mac! this'll do it, by God!" The rest had turned to one another, embracing frantically and repeating his words in a kind of frenzy.

Presently, McGrath raised his hand, and, as silence was restored at the signal, turned with his thin smile to the bar-tender.

"Set 'em up, Dick," he said, composedly. "It's on me, this time, and we'll drink to better days."

And the clamor broke out afresh, as the throng surged toward the bar.

In the confusion, Cavendish made his way to the side-door, and, passing through it into the street, hesitated, dazzled by the brilliant light. It was broad day.

As the lieutenant-governor entered his anteroom that morning, his eyes contracted suddenly, and he stopped, with his hand upon the knob of the

door. There could be no mistaking the look in the eyes of the man who sat facing him, gripping desperately at the arms of his chair. Cavendish was as white as chalk, with the hunted look of despair which lay so vividly on Barclay's remembrance of the night when they had met in Bradbury avenue. He rose, as the lieutenant-governor appeared, and drew himself up with an effort at steadiness, conscious that the others present were observing him narrowly. But Barclay's hesitation was as brief as it had been involuntary. With a bare glance at his subordinates, he came forward cordially to take Cavendish's hand, and then, opening the door of his private office, motioned him to enter first.

"Glad to see you," he said, steadily, as their hands met.

Once inside, the manner of both men changed as abruptly as it had been assumed. The lieutenant-governor went slowly toward his desk, with his head bent, and Cavendish, throwing himself into the nearest chair, drew a flask from his pocket, with no attempt at concealment, and drank a long draught. He looked up to find that the lieutenant-governor had wheeled at the desk, and was standing, with his eyes fixed upon him.

"Wait a minute," said Cavendish, as Barclay seemed about to speak. "We won't discuss this, for the moment, if you please."

He held up the flask, with a shrug.

"In fact, we needn't discuss it at all," he continued. "I've simply gone to hell; that's all there is about it. I knew I would; I told you so long ago. I didn't come here to make excuses—or to receive rebukes, John Barclay. I've a means here of settling the problem which can give cards and spades to all your projects of reform." And he tapped his pocket, with the shadow of a smile. The lieutenant-governor made no attempt to interrupt him.

"What I did come to say," went on Cavendish, more steadily, "is that your life and Mr. Rathbawne's are in danger. You're to be put out of the way, both

of you, before twelve to-night. McGrath's determined on it, and there's no lack of men to carry out his orders. The strikers are desperate. I overheard their talk, while—well, while I was getting drunk! What's that?"

He stopped, with his hand to his ear. Some one was tapping at the communicating door.

"Put up that flask!" said Barclay, under his breath, adding aloud, as Cavendish obeyed:

"Come in!"

The door swung open softly, and Governor Abbott, smiling and rubbing his hands, appeared upon the threshold.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Barclay," he said. "I did not know you were engaged. We have the pleasure of another visit from the citizens' committee, and, by a singularly opportune coincidence, Mr. McGrath has called at the same moment. Can you spare us a little of your time?"

With a bow and a glance at Cavendish, Barclay followed his superior silently from the room.

In the governor's office, he found four men, all standing. McGrath, with his back to the others, was examining, with an elaborate air of interest, a map of Alleghenia that hung upon the wall. Colonel Broadcastle and his two fellow-members of the citizens' committee stood close to, and facing, the governor's desk. The air was electric with suggestion of a crisis about to come.

When the governor began to speak, it was in his habitually suave voice; yet he was visibly nervous.

"Colonel Broadcastle has been good enough to observe," he said, "that, if I do not call out the militia within three hours, to protect the interests of Mr. Peter Rathbawne, his committee will appeal for aid to the federal government. Now—er—now, in my place and in such a situation, Mr. Barclay—er—what would you do?"

The lieutenant-governor's nerve, strained beyond endurance by the events of the past twenty-four hours, snapped like a dry twig at the con-

temptuous hypocrisy of the other's tone.

"Do?" he thundered, "do? Why, as God is my witness, Elijah Abbott, if I were in your place, I would do what any honest man would do! I would do what my oath demanded of me! I would clap that man McGrath into jail for iniquitous inciting to riot, and place Colonel Broadcastle, at the head of his regiment, in charge of the city to restore order and the reign of law, and to redeem Alleghenia from the disgrace that is overwhelming her. Do? Before God, the republic, and the state, Governor Abbott, I would do my duty as a man!"

"Then do it!"

The words, spoken from the threshold of Barclay's office, rent the silence like a thunderclap; and, before those present had time to turn, there came the sound of a pistol-shot, and Governor Abbott, wheeling slowly on his heels, crashed, head foremost, through the plate-glass window behind him, and lay, limp and motionless, across the sill.

"Then do it, by God, Governor Barclay!" repeated Cavendish, and flung his revolver in the centre of the room.

The apartment was already filling with those attracted from the corridors and adjacent offices by the sound of the shot. Several seized Cavendish, who stood without movement, smiling. Barclay, Colonel Broadcastle and the other members of the committee lifted the governor's body from the position in which it had fallen, and laid it upon a couch. After a brief examination, the colonel looked up into Barclay's eyes.

"He's dead, sir," he said in an undertone. "The assassin was right: you are governor of Alleghenia."

For an instant, Barclay returned his glance with one of earnest inquiry.

"Even in the face of this tragedy," added Colonel Broadcastle, in the same low voice, "I trust you will not forget the exigencies of the situation. It is for you to act, sir, and there is no time to spare."

Barclay suddenly raised himself to

his full height, and faced the silent gathering.

"Gentlemen," he said, firmly, "the governor is dead. For the moment, at least, I act in his stead. Those who have the assassin in charge will see that he is immediately turned over to the police. Mr. McGrath, you will consider yourself under arrest. Colonel Broadcastle, you will immediately assemble your regiment at its armory, issue twenty rounds of ball cartridge, and three days' rations, and hold yourself in readiness for riot duty, subject to my orders."

Then he faced Cavendish.

"There's a message I'd like to have delivered," said the latter, still smiling. "It is that Diogenes has eaten the ugly little bug."

VIII

As Barclay had foreseen, the adoption of stringent measures was all that was needed to break the backbone of the strike at the Rathbawne mills. The presence of the Ninth Regiment, under command of that noted disciplinarian, Colonel Broadcastle, and terribly in earnest, as was evinced by the ball cartridges gleaming in their belts, was sufficient to discourage any further attempts at disorder; the sudden shift of base of the newspapers, which had formerly supported the rioters, and now, taking their cue from the policy of the new governor, counseled immediate surrender; above all, the trial, conviction and sentence of their moving spirit, McGrath, to a term of years for inciting to riot—all were irresistible factors in the union's capitulation. One week after the death of Governor Abbott, the Rathbawne mills were running once more, and Peter Rathbawne himself, though whiter of hair and but a shadow of his old self, was, nevertheless, on the high road to recovery.

The trial and conviction of Spencer Cavendish were accomplished with unexampled celerity. He would admit of no defense, although the law-

yer appointed for him by the court was strenuous for a plea of insanity, based upon the singular remark which he had made upon the announcement of Elijah Abbott's death, and which was construed by those who heard it as ample proof of irresponsibility. Called upon in court to give his defense, Cavendish stated, in a loud, clear voice, that he was strictly accountable for his act; that he was in full possession of his senses at the time, and that he had killed the governor in the firm conviction that he was a menace to the safety of the community, and that the latter's sole salvation lay in his removal, and the succession of the lieutenant-governor to the position of chief executive.

"I desire," he concluded, with the same odd smile he had worn at the moment of the governor's death, "nothing but the full penalty of the law."

The next day, Spencer Cavendish was sentenced to be executed on the thirtieth of the following month, at the state's prison of Mowberly.

Then followed the most remarkable manifestation of popular sentiment ever known in Alleghenia. As Barclay had once said of them, the citizens of his long-degraded state were less vicious than callous, and their callousness was effectively cured by the dramatic event which had removed a corrupt official from the head of the state government, and put in his place a man whose first acts were proof positive of strength, integrity and singleness of purpose. The revulsion of feeling was overwhelming. Even the press, which had sneered at, and cried down, John Barclay, was forced to the other extreme. Relieved from the burden of lawlessness which had lain on Kenton City for close upon two months, the citizens went over in a body to the support of their new governor. He was cheered, on his every appearance in public, as assiduously as he had been ignored before, and, responding with the whole force of his sensitive nature to this longed-

for and unexpected popularity, he devoted himself more and more earnestly, day by day, to the welfare of the state which was his idol.

But, following in the wake of this revulsion of feeling in favor of Barclay, came one, hardly less complete, in favor of Spencer Cavendish. While there could be no condoning his act, it was none the less evident, to even the most rigid adherents of law, that by it he had conferred an indisputable benefit upon the state of Alleghenia; and his open statement of his reasons at the time of his trial militated for rather than against him. So it was that a public petition was framed and circulated, asking, at the hands of Governor Barclay, the commutation of the death-sentence to one of life imprisonment. Little by little, the list of signatures grew, until, a week before the date fixed for Cavendish's execution, they were numbered by tens of thousands. Then the petition, rolled into a cylinder, was presented to the governor by a committee, and left for his consideration.

To Barclay, the intervening time had passed with almost incredible rapidity. His days, filled as they were to overflowing with numberless and complex duties, were yet the pleasantest he had ever known. At last, he was what he had dreamed of being—an active factor, the most active of all factors—in the advancement of his state. Redeemed, as by a miracle, from the disgrace which had laid her low, Alleghenia arose, in his eyes, like a phoenix, throwing off the ashes of her reproach, and blazing, with new wings of burnished beauty, in the sunlight of hope and peace.

Barclay had retained his old office, not caring to make use of a room so permeated with associations of recent tragedy as was that which had formerly been Governor Abbott's. Now, with the windows open and the soft May air stirring the papers on his desk, he sat, looking vacantly across the room, with the huge petition spread out before him. His attention,

long absorbed by the problem in hand, was diverted by a tap on the ante-room door, and, in answer to his call, Natalie Rathbawne stood before him, smiling out of the exquisite daintiness of a fresh Spring frock.

"You've forgotten!" she said, immediately, at sight of his knit brows.

"Forgotten what?" inquired the governor, inadvisedly.

The girl's little foot stamped, almost noiselessly, upon the thick carpet.

"Upon my word!" she exclaimed, "if there's one thing worse than being engaged to a lieutenant-governor, it's being engaged to the governor himself! Forgotten, of course, that we are to lunch together, and look at wall-papers afterward! Do you know, John Barclay, I don't believe you mean to marry me, after all? We'll be just approaching the altar, when——"

She was interrupted in characteristic fashion, and disengaged herself, with a great air of indignation, from Barclay's arms.

"If you want to take luncheon in the company of a rag carpet," she said, severely, "that's the very best way to go about it. Get your hat."

There was a little pause, as Barclay filed some papers in his private safe, and then one startled word from the girl.

"John!"

Wheeling abruptly, he saw her standing at the desk, with her hand on the petition, and her eyes, wide and wonderstruck, searching his face.

"Dearest!" he said, impulsively, "I wish you hadn't."

But Natalie only laughed, joyfully.

"But I'm glad, John!" she answered, "glad—glad—glad! What a wonderful thing it is to be governor, boy dear! I don't think I ever really understood before. Think of it! To have the power of life and death—to be able to right the wrongs of justice, with a single stroke of the pen! Oh, John, sign it now—before we go! I shall be so much happier."

The governor made no reply. He stood, with his head bent, smoothing his hat with the fingers of his right

hand. Gradually, the expression of eager expectation on her face changed to one of anxiety.

"John," she said, in a half-whisper, "you *are* going to sign it, aren't you, boy dear?"

"I'm not sure," faltered the governor. "I'm not quite sure, dearest. At first, I thought—what he said—about Diogenes, you know—it was so odd—it might be construed as insanity."

"Oh, *no*, John! Why, *we* know what that meant! No, no! The best part of it all was his sanity, his wonderful courage, his braving of almost certain death for what he believed—and knew, John—*knew* to be best and right. Think what he did for Alleghenia, dear. He was almost as great an instrument in her salvation as you have been. Think what he did for all of us—for you, in giving you this wonderful opportunity; for me, for dad! John, how *can* you hesitate?"

"Natalie," said the governor, "come here."

He slipped an arm about her neck as she approached, and drew her close to him, turning the while, until they faced the emblazoned arms of Alleghenia which hung upon his wall. Then, with his finger, he traced the legend beneath the shield.

"Do you know what this means?" he asked. "*Justitia*—to be just to all men, without fear or favor; *Lex*—to abide by the law, however fallible it be, in the trust that it is the best that *man* can do in imitation of the immutable decrees of God; *Integritas*—to be true to the oaths we have sworn, and the promises we have made, and our conviction of what is right. I am not merely an individual man, dearest. Were I that, and it lay in my power, Spencer Cavendish should go free to-day. But I am governor of Alleghenia, and, as such, owe an allegiance that personal prejudice cannot impugn. Where I doubted before, now I am sure. Listen to her bidding—*Justitia, Lex, Integritas*—justice, law, and good faith, in the sight of heaven and earth! God save the state!"

"John," whispered the girl, "John, you're right! God save the state!"

Slowly, the governor of Alleghenia led her back to the desk, and, taking up a pen, wrote five words at the head of the Cavendish petition, with a firm stroke under the last. And these were:

"Disapproved.

"JOHN HAMILTON BARCLAY."

Governor.

Then, turning to the girl who loved him, he took her in his arms.



A SAINT'S INFIRMITY

"YOUR father's deafness—was it cured
When he Saint Anthony implored?"

"No," said the boy, "'twas not to be;
Saint Anthony was deaf as he!"

JOHN B. TABB



A LOVER'S QUARREL

SHE (*turning at the door*)—I think you are just hateful, and I'm never going to speak to you again; so there's no use coming into the music-room after me—because I'll be on the rustic bench, at the far end of the conservatory.

SAPPHO TO PHAON

By John Ernest McCann

WITH thy arm on which to rest,
And my head upon thy breast,
To the islands of the blest,
We will reach the purple islands in the myrtle-scented west.

Far from Lesbos we will go,
To the isles I used to know,
In the dreams that used to flow
Through my ardent soul of Summer, when my heart woke in a glow.

I see all I love and prize
In the oceans of thine eyes.
I am loving, and not wise;
All the world is nothing to me: love alone I idolize.

Ah! when all my dreams are sung,
Thou wilt still be fresh and young,
As each morning that is flung
On the barren hills of darkness, when around the sun is swung.

Thou'lt be young, and I'll be old;
I'll be timid, thou'lt be bold;
Thou'lt be glowing, I'll be cold:
That is why thy heart against mine in the present I would hold.

My soul and body, heart and brain,
Await thee in the song-drenched lane
That runs through roses to the main,
Where my shallop idly tosses, waiting love's sweet hurricane.

All the woman in me's thine;
All that woman calls thee mine;
All that woman would entwine
All the roses in thy being with the tendrils of love's vine.

I have sobbed and sighed and cried,
When not dreaming by thy side,
Since love deeply buried pride,
And all the modest maiden in me blushed and moaned and died.

How I love thee, Venus knows:
She's the mother of my woes.
Hot and cold thy light love blows—
Would to Venus thou wert Sappho, and I Phaon, cold as snows!

There . . . forgive me . . . I am mad! . . .
 Nay, my Phaon, I am sad—
 I, who, once in gladness clad,
 Only knew the good in living, never dreamed there could be bad.

Songs of nightingales in Spring
 I shall challenge when I sing,
 As thy drowsy head I swing
 On my bosom, when the aromatic day hath taken wing.

Myrtle, jonquil, samphire, rose,
 All shall lull thee to repose;
 And my kisses shall compose
 Thy blue eyelids, when those eyelids all my paradise inclose.

Venus rocks my soul! 'Tis slain
 In the branches of my brain—
 Far above cool friendship's plain;
 And my spirit's seared by liquid whips, like blossoms scourged by rain.

Ah, my Phaon, see it bleed!
 Phaon, Phaon, hear me plead!
 Couldst thou see each liquid bead
 That from eyes of mine runs soulward, there to nourish love's poor seed,

Thou wouldst turn thine eyes to me,
 As my racked soul turns to thee—
 Leave the girls of Sicily,
 With their sugared, but false, phrases, to the watchful sisters three.

Come, my Phaon, haste my way!
 All that's mine is thine to-day!
 To-morrow . . . To-morrow may
 Farther be than yesterday, and never hear love's roundelay.

Haste, my Phaon! Light and fleet,
 Let thy heart race with thy feet!
 Oh, that moment when we meet! . . .
 Ah, thou hyacinth-eyed Phaon! . . . Rain thy kisses on me, sweet!

Crush my heart into thy breast!
 Keep it there, a throbbing guest
 Close beside thine let it nest,
 Till eternity enfolds us in the twilight of the west.



THE HOTEL OF 2003

CLERK—Michael, are you about through moving those trunks?

PORTER—Yis, sor; in a few minutes.

"Well, when you've finished, stretch the life-net over the front pavement. Mrs. Hibawl has just telephoned from the top floor that her husband has fallen out of the window."

THE YOUNG PERSON NEXT DOOR

By Justus Miles Forman

THE brazen young person next door will eventually drive me from the river. She has become quite insufferable. At first, I hoped that she might intend making only a short stop—a week-end, or something of the sort; but, now, I am persuaded that she means to devote the remainder of her natural life to spoiling my fishing—and my temper.

This morning, while I was gloating over three beauties which I had taken in less than fifteen minutes—they were nearly a pound each—she appeared suddenly at the hedge, and said, "Boo!"—which I considered childish.

"What are you going to do with the poor dears?" she demanded, after she saw that I meant not to look up.

"Eat 'em, madame!" said I, quite savagely; "eat 'em! God bless my soul, did you think I was going to wear 'em in my hat? Did you think I was going to dance with 'em?"

But, instead of being properly cast down by this, she only burst into one of her absurd little gurgles of laughter, and proceeded to tear leaves from the top of the box-hedge, and to devour them. I expect they will kill her; though, as I have never before known anybody who ate box, I have no data by which to judge.

"Your garden grows lovelier and lovelier each day," she said, after a bit, in a very insinuating tone. And she poked her head further over the top of the hedge to look. "Your roses are so much better than—than ours!" she continued, with a little sigh.

"Ho!" said I, making a magnificent cast out to midstream.

"Are you afraid I'd step on the

flowers?" she asked, after a long time, during which I had quite forgotten her.

"I expect you'd eat 'em," said I, looking at the hedge.

"You're a brute!" said she. "And I've not the least desire to see your old roses!" she declared. "I'm sorry I mentioned them." And she walked away with her chin in the air. She always falls into these childish rages, and goes away with her chin in the air, but seldom so quickly. She commonly annoys me for quite half an hour or more, before I get rid of her.

It is something like three weeks, I think, since she first appeared, and in all that time I have not enjoyed a proper morning's fishing. There should be some redress at law against such people.

My garden slopes down to the river, and is separated from hers—I mean from the garden of the place at which she is apparently stopping—by a hedge of box. I have fished from my river bank for fifteen years, and never, until three weeks ago, was I disturbed by any one from across the box-hedge. I do not see the people who live next door, because we are not on terms, owing to an ancient matter of right of way.

The first day she appeared—and for three or four days subsequently—she was content with standing about on the bank, or sitting under a great tree. There is nothing to bring her to the river bank—nothing at all, save her obvious desire to attract my attention. I expect she means to marry me, but she sha'n't do it. Marry me, indeed!

I say she was, at first, content with standing or sitting about, but it was

that sort of standing and sitting about which is common to young women of the frivolous type, when they have designs upon some man. She was determined to be looked at. She also took an unwarranted interest in my fishing—quite as if I were giving an exhibition! She would stand on the bank, hands clasped together, watching with a most exaggerated interest while I played a fish. If I landed him, she would give a quite absurd little sigh of relief. What was it to her, I should like to know? If I lost the fish, she'd giggle.

Then, one morning—she had giggled twice, most impertinently—I lost my temper, and broke the rod—like any novice.

"Dear me!" she said, pretending to be grieved. "You've broken your pole."

"Rod, madame!" said I, testily; "rod!" and scowled at her across the hedge.

"Oh," said she; "isn't it the same thing?"

I turned my back on her, and went up to the house.

The next day, she was there at the hedge before me.

"Good morning!" she said. I refused to look at her.

"Have you mended your broken pole?" she persisted.

"Rod," said I, shortly.

"Rod," said she.

"This is another one," I growled, opening my fly-book.

"It is a very pretty one," she conceded; "but it doesn't look so very strong, does it? I used to fish a great deal, years ago," she informed me.

Years ago, indeed! She would have been in her cradle years ago! "But we called them poles," she went on. "They were long ones, and dreadfully heavy. They didn't come to pieces, like yours. I must remember to call yours a—a rod."

"That will not be at all necessary," said I, disagreeably.

"And we didn't have those funny little feathers on our hooks, either,"

said she; "we had worms—little, squirmy ones."

That morning, I had no fishing. I turned my back on her again, and went up to the house, where I smoked a great many pipes, and wandered about among the roses, scowling down toward the foot of the garden, where the river runs and the box-hedge stands.

"Damme," said I, "it has come to a pretty pass, when an elderly and respectable country gentleman can't fish from the foot of his own garden without being annoyed and spoken to—yes, by gad! even spoken to—by strange females. I'll have the law on her!" said I, fuming. "I'll not put up with it!"

Jannet saw me among the roses, and came out from the scullery with a frying-pan, or some such objectionable object, in her hand.

"What do ye here?" she demanded. "Why are ye no' at your feeshin'?"

Jannet has looked after me for too many years. She has grown altogether too presumptuous. If I've wet feet or no appetite, she orders me about shamefully.

"I'm smoking my pipe," said I. "Go back to your work, woman!"

"Ye're no' weel!" said she truculently.

"Go back to your work," said I, scowling. "And for decency's sake," I added, when she was within the scullery door, "for decency's sake lay me out some respectable clothes. I'm dressed like a tramp."

Jannet stood for several minutes in the scullery door, pale and open-mouthed, eying me fearsomely.

"Him fashin' himsel' about clae's!" she said, in an awed voice; "him!"

The next morning, I went very early to my fishing.

"Aha, madame," said I; "I'll outwit you this time."

But, as I straightened up with my second trout in the landing net, she appeared. She was flushed a little, and breathing fast, as though she had hurried.

"You're early!" said she.

Early! God bless my soul! Did

she think I came there to meet her? Did she think we'd an appointment for a certain hour, at the river bank, like some nurse-maid and her young man? Early!

I did not even speak to her; I scowled. Then I turned my back, and, I expect, went red, for I caught her looking at my clothes. I dare say she thought I'd changed them on her account!

"Only two fishes?" she inquired, presently, poking her head over the top of the hedge to look.

"I don't fish for the market," said I, disagreeably.

"No?" she asked, opening her eyes wide. I presume she'd been thinking that I gained a livelihood from the river.

"Do you eat them all yourself?" she questioned. "Dear me, you must be very greedy!"

"Madame," said I, in a tone of exasperation, "it would appear to be impossible for an old gentleman of quiet tastes, who minds his own affairs—who minds his own affairs," I repeated—"to fish from the foot of his garden, free from annoyance and—and insult."

I expected that would, at once, put an end to the whole affair; but the brazen young person merely looked as if she wished to laugh.

"A what sort of gentleman?" she demanded, as if she had not heard aright.

"An old gentleman!" said I, shortly.

Then she did laugh—burst into one of those silly gurgles of hers, and laughed till she had to sit down. I could have beaten her; but, instead, I turned my back upon her, and went up to the house. I was so enraged that I even forgot the two trout. When I went for them later in the day, they were gone.

I find that I have not as yet given any description of her, and I suppose she must be described, though to me her personal appearance is a matter of the most complete indifference.

In the first place, she is offensively young, and she has many of the inconsequent and irresponsible ways no-

ticeable in kittens. She is—being, as I said, young—round and pink, with a great deal of yellow hair, and blue eyes. I fancy, from her shameless fashion of parading, and attempting to call attention to, her charms, she imagines herself attractive. Her attire, of lace and fluffy, thin materials, in white or pink, is far too elaborate for the country—in excessively bad taste, I should say, though I take little interest in such matters.

Her voice—since one must hear it—is not altogether unpleasing. It is of that nature called, I am told, *contralto*. She has a certain peculiarity of accent, which seems, in a way, foreign, and yet not sufficiently foreign to be *Continental*.

I had a young, half-grown slip of a lad, who calls himself my nephew, down from Cambridge last week, and he, catching a glimpse of her over the hedge, informed me that she was a ripping little beauty—I think that was the expression. He annoyed me so much, with talking of her and asking who she was and announcing his intention of making inquiries, that I packed him off again in a hurry. What difference should it make to me whether she was a "ripping little beauty," or not? I was praying only that she might go away and leave me in peace.

The day after this lad's departure, she asked me about him over the hedge.

Was he, perhaps, my son, or—or grandson? Here she looked as if she wished to laugh, and I knew she was trying to poke fun at me.

"I am unmarried, madame," said I, coldly. It occurred to me, just too late, that she had quite possibly been seeking this very bit of information.

"O-oh," said she, in a tone of commiserating sorrow, "what a pity!"

"I beg leave to differ with you, madame," said I.

"He was *very* handsome," said she, reflectively, harking back to the nephew. "I thought," she explained, "that he might be your grand—your son, because you looked so much alike," and she gurgled, shamelessly.

I turned my back on her, and made a wretched cast into the river.

"Of course, he is a mere infant," she said, loftily.

Infant! From *her*! I fixed her with a glance of disdain, but I might quite as well have looked at the river. She seems not even to understand disdain.

"They are all infants till forty," she said, nodding at me. It was the first rational remark I had ever heard her make. "And then," she continued, pensively, "then they make out they're old, and snap at people." She threatened to gurgle again, and I turned my back on her.

She was quite silent for a long time—so long that I thought she had gone away, and looked over my shoulder to make sure. She was still standing by the hedge, and, when she saw me look, ventured upon a little, wistful smile. I used to know some one who smiled like that, very, very long ago. Tut, tut! damme, they all do it! It's one of their infernal tricks.

"Could you," said she, with that little, wistful smile; "would you—do you think you could, some time, let me see your garden? I can catch a glimpse of one little corner of it, from my window. Do you think you could show it me, some time—just the roses?"

She was like a child begging for sweets—a little, wide-eyed, trusting, beautiful child. And it's so cursedly hard to refuse a child things! Yes, a little, wide-eyed—Come, come!

I would not look at her. I scowled out across the river.

"My garden is not a public park, madame," said I, as gruffly as I could.

"Not—even a private one?" she pleaded; "not just a private one that you could let a little girl see, if she'd promise to be good? not even that sort of one?"

"Here, here!" said I to myself, "this won't do! I tell you it won't do! Once you let her in your garden, she'll be all over the place. She'll come here every day. She'll give you no peace. I dare say she'll be wanting

to have lawn parties among your roses, and ask a lot of chattering friends. It won't do! Don't you listen to her pleas. They're all that way—girls. You've jolly good reason for knowing it. They're full of tricks. Don't you let her in!"

"No, madame," said I, firmly. I still held my back toward her.

"You're a brute!" she cried, stamping her foot. "I didn't know any man could be such a brute. I'm sorry I ever spoke to you!" And she marched away, with her chin in the air.

"Now," said I, "I shall have an hour of peaceful fishing." But I didn't. I expect that young person had spoiled my temper. I went up among the roses, and smoked several pipes. I caught Jannet watching me, with furtive suspicion, through a scullery window.

I have discovered that she is an American. That accounts for her peculiar little accent, though I have always understood that the American accent is nasal, disagreeable. Hers is not at all so.

It was Stubbs, the butcher, down in the village, who told me. No, I did not demean myself by asking him questions. I merely mentioned the fact—as I stopped in to make a complaint about the beef—that I had a new neighbor. It seems that she is a sort of cousin to the people next door, with whom I am not on terms. She is here for the Summer.

I've been looking back over that right-of-way dispute, which occurred ten years ago. It was really quite trivial. After all, such quarrels are amusingly foolish and petty; they betoken a small mind.

I have been writing to young Johnstone to send me a supply of cravats in the season's fashion, and to my tailors for two or three suits of flannels. It has lately been forced upon me that I pay too little attention to my dress. I am not so old that I can afford absolutely to neglect my appearance.

But, while I am speaking of appear-

ances, I must say there is something about that of the brazen young person next door which annoys me. I think some one ought to tell her that her attire is very often—well, inadequate. Of course, she cannot know it herself. I dare say her dressing-room is a bit dark. Still, if there is any other woman in the house, one would think—It is like this. I have already said that she affects pink and white fabrics of a thin and filmy description. Oftenest, they are white and so very thin that—well, they are too thin. It appears that a woman's—undergarments are made fast at the shoulders and—thereabouts, by little bows of ribbon, pink or blue—generally pink. Well, the young person's gowns are so filmy that these ribbons actually show through, quite distinctly. At first, I did not notice, but, when she began to stand close beside the hedge, talking to me, I could not avoid seeing. Of course, I make a point of looking away as much as possible; still, it distresses me, because I know how terribly she would feel about it, if she knew. Naturally, I cannot tell her. I have thought of sending her an anonymous note, but I am afraid that would not do. If only I knew some woman who knows her!

This morning she fell into the river.

She had just been saying something impertinent—I forget what—and I had turned my back upon her, to make a cast, when she screamed, suddenly, and fell backward over the edge of the low bank, near which she had been standing.

I turned, at her scream, just in time to see her strike the water.

At such moments, things happen so quickly that, afterward, one never can quite put them in order—can quite say what occurred. I remember nothing save a swift, angry thought that the young person had done this on purpose—with the deliberate intention of forcing me to save her. Indeed, now that it is all-over, I am forced to a suspicion—unworthy, I hope—that I was right. Then, I was in the water, without my jacket, which must somehow

have got itself off my shoulders. I did not take it off, I am quite certain.

Of course, she attempted at once to throw her arms about my neck—they always do, I believe—but I snapped at her so savagely that her hands dropped from sheer fright, and I swam, holding one hand under her head, to the bank.

And it chanced that my garden is below hers—as the river runs—so that, being borne along a bit by the current, we landed, perforce, at almost the very spot where I commonly stand to fish. There is a gnarled willow reaching out over the stream, and, holding to this, I drew the girl out of the water, and laid her down on the dry turf.

Now, I dislike all women, and hold, with some reason, I believe, a low opinion of the sex as a whole; but I am not, any more than the next man, proof against a woman who is helpless and half-fainting, particularly one whom I have just saved from death. This is especially true when a woman is comely; and I suppose the brazen young person next door might be so described.

She had not quite fainted away, but she lay at my feet pale and lax and quite still, eyes half-open and lips parted. I may as well confess that she was very, very lovely, and that, in those moments, I had no heart for jeers and suspicions—no heart for anything but a strange, great wave of tenderness, for long-forgotten throbbings.

I knelt beside her, bending over her, for a time, quite as helpless as she, with no notion at all of what ought to be done. I discovered, after a bit, that I was holding one of her hands in both my own, but it was cold and wet and still.

It happened that the morning had begun threateningly, and I had brought down with me to the river bank a long rain-coat. It lay a little distance from us, and, all at once, my eyes fell on it. I brought it over, and, since she was, by this time, stirring and trying to sit up in her soaked garments, I lifted her, placing an arm under her shoulders, and wrapped the coat about

her from head to foot—it would have gone round her twice. I started to button it at the neck, but my hand touched her chin once, and I met her eyes. She was smiling—a plucky, brave little ghost of a smile, and my heart—confound it!—was at its long-forgotten throbbings. I swear, I couldn't button the thing. My fingers shook and would not obey me, and I felt my face going red. She had to button it herself, and her own cheeks went a bit pink, I fancied.

She tried to say something—to thank me for saving her, and all that sort of thing, in a little quaver, but I growled at her quite savagely—growling was my only salvation just then—I wish it had more of an effect upon her. Then she turned away, walking a bit unsteadily, and stood by the tall box-hedge, with my rain-coat dragging on the turf around her feet, and her wet hair down over her eyes.

"How am I going to go home?" she asked, still in a little, timid quaver; she was not the same brazen young person at all. "How am I going to get over the hedge?"

"This way," said I.

Now, it happens that I was an oarsman at Cambridge, and I have preserved a certain bodily vigor. I put a hand on either side of her waist—I'll swear my fingers nearly met around it!—and swung her over the hedge, which is breast-high, setting her down very gently on the other side.

For a moment, she stood looking into my face, and there was an odd, great light in her eyes.

"A what sort of gentleman?" she cried, half-whispering—a little, mocking, hysterical whisper.

"An old gentleman, madame!" said I, testily.

Then she laughed, as she had laughed the other day, but with a sort of catch in the laugh. And she turned and ran up through her garden, with that absurd rain-coat of mine flapping about her heels.

To-night, my heart has been waked and shaken within me till I have wept

—that heart which I had thought asleep forever, beyond waking. No sleep for me this night! Memories—old sweets retasted, old wounds reopened, faces pressing eagerly toward mine out of the dark, dead voices that murmured low and clear beside me. Aye, I have wept like any woman. Tears are bitter when one's eyes have been long dry.

This morning, I went to my fishing, and one came to the high box-hedge, and jibed at me across it. She was in a mood of banter—a most exasperating mood, for she is an April lady, and various. She teased me till I snarled most ferociously back at her, and, in a towering rage, drove her away. Then I went up and smoked among the roses.

In the evening, after dark, I took my pipe, and walked in the lane which passes my front garden and the front garden of the house next door.

It is a good lane. There are trees here, and open fields there. There are sweet Summer smells of dust and bruised green things, of night coolness and the breath of the river beyond, of roses—when a puff of warm wind brings up their scent—of heliotrope and lilies. There are crickets, very drowsy, from the roadside, and big cockchafers that blunder through the gloom. There are sleepy cries of birds, and the barking of a dog from very far away. And there are warm, bright, companionable stars—familiar stars—overhead, and maybe a moon that rises, great and crimson and portentous, over the outermost hill, and makes a lacework of shadows across the road.

It is a good lane. The crickets sang to me, and the birds said their prayers to me—sleepy prayers, in which they skipped shamefully—and there was a warm scent of roses in the air; and the moon poked fun at me in huge, black, sprawling caricatures on the road before my feet. I halted before the house next door, and looked in over the wall that stands about the front garden.

It is a broad, rambling cottage, the house next door. It looks comfort-

able. There were lights in one of the wings—red-shaded lights, dim and soft. Some one touched a piano, playing low, slow chords. And then a voice, which has been dead fifteen years, came out to me through the gloom, and took me by the heart, and turned me to a whimpering child.

Ah, no! Of course it was not the voice that has been dead fifteen years, but it was like it—oh, cruelly, beautifully like it! And it sang one of those old songs that I had thought dead—a foolish old song, cheap and common, but sweet as lavender. I do not know even the words, save brokenly, here and there.

I think I dropped my pipe. I think I laid my arms out upon the low wall's coping, and bowed my head upon them, and sobbed. I know that many years dropped from me, like a garment, and that I sat once more in the shadow of the music-room at the castle, and watched her beautiful face as she sang this cheap old song which we had loved together.

I saw very many things that I had tried to forget. Pictures, garret-hidden, crowded before me, and I laughed and wept. Old sounds that I had loved and forgotten came to my ears; old scents came to my nostrils. They came with a joy keen as pain, with a pain sweet as joy. I stretched shaking hands toward the crimsoned windows of the house next door.

"Oh, stop it, stop it!" I cried, in the dark; "stop it! I can bear no more! Leave me my dead in their graves, and my heart in its sleeping. Oh, stop it, stop it!"

But I clung there, shaking, to the wall, till that golden voice, with the sadness and sweetness and heart-break in it, was hushed, and the last chords from the piano had died away, and the lights were gone. Then, back here to my own room, to have it all out! I have been fighting, wrestling with set teeth and strained fists against the flood which would engulf me, but I can fight no more. God knows I would hold off those memories, had I the strength; but I am very weak. They

press in upon me out of the night, sweet, bitter, insistent. They will not be gainsaid.

Memories, memories, memories!

This morning, I carried a rod and a landing-net to the river bank, but it was a poor pretense. I think I knew that I should not fish. I was very tired, for there had been no sleep through the night, only a fitful doze in the gray of the morning.

Still, I had myself somewhat in hand again. And there should not be another storm, I said to myself, very bitterly. I would guard well against that. Let sleeping dogs lie—and sleeping hearts.

"If she should come again this morning," said I, "I'll not speak to her. After all, she is but playing tricks—like all the rest of them. No more of this opening of doors. Too much pain lies that way. Let her think what she chooses! I'll not speak to her."

Then, all at once, her voice came over the hedge—the voice that had sung to me through the night. Alas, and alas, the heart in me dropped a beat, and raced to make it up.

I faced her, white and grim, and the rod trailed from my slack hand, in the lazy river.

"Not even a private park?" she said, pleading, with her wistful smile; "not just a private one that you could—let a little girl see—if she'd promise to be good? not even that sort of one?"

"How should I let you in? There is no way," said I, a little wearily, for somehow it seemed that I could not say no to her: this, after all my good resolutions, all my heart-hardenings, all my determinations to have done with her!

"There is a gate," said she. "It is overgrown with vines, and the hinges are rusted fast, but—you are very strong."

"That gate," said I, still wearily, still looking into her eyes—and I think they waked to a certain excitement—"that gate has not been opened for ten years. It was closed as the result of

a dispute with—with your household. If I open it, I acknowledge myself wrong in an old dispute."

"It is rusted fast," said she, "but you are very strong."

"I am very weak, child," said I, sighing. And I walked along the hedge to the disused gate. She followed me on the other side, and we stood, for a moment, looking into each other's eyes. Then, I put forth my hands, and tore the gate open—tore it clean away from rusted hinge and bolt. And she came into my garden.

I think the roses bowed and bent to her as she went among them, queenly. She was more beautiful than they. I think she must have known how it would be with me, when I should see her there. She belonged among my roses; she was of their kind—though lovelier.

She had no jibes to fling at me to-day, no teasings to rouse my wrath. She was quite sober, though most divinely tender, smiling sometimes as a goddess smiles—not in mirth. She even said little in praise of my garden, and for that I loved her. But her eyes took infinite joy of it, and her cheeks flushed.

So we came through the roses to the garden's upper end near the house, and stood there a moment, looking down the long, sweet slope to the winking river. And, as we stood, there came, from the scullery window beyond, a sudden wail and the crash of broken china.

"What is that?" said she, turning.

"I heard a noise."

"It is my servant, Jannet," said I. "She saw you here with me in the garden, and broke a dish. It is long since a woman has been here, madame."

"Madame?" said she; "madame?" as again we moved down toward the river. "I think no one has ever before called me, 'madame,' in all my life. It sounds, somehow," said she, "as if I were gray-haired and very stately, and went in silks and powder. Still, I like it—'madame.' It is *your*

name for me. The others," she said, presently, "call me Sylvia."

"Oh, my God!" said I, shaking. "It was *her* name." And the new Sylvia looked at me, wondering, till we came to the river bank, where the turf was green and cool and soft, and there was shade.

And there we sat down, near the old willow that sprawls above the water; and I, that I might avoid her eyes, made pretense of dismounting the rod which I had left by the stream's edge, but my fingers bungled over it.

"You are very pale, to-day," said she, with her little, timid smile; "and very grim and—and different, somehow. Didn't you sleep?" she asked.

"No," said I, looking away; "no, I didn't sleep."

Then, all at once, I met her eyes. "Oh, child, child!" I cried, and my fingers strained at the slender rod across my knees till it cracked and broke in two, "did you sing last evening? Did you sing an old, cheap, foolish song that died long since? Did you sit alone at the piano in a red, soft light, and sing? Did you?" But I knew that it had been she.

"Yes," she said, nodding; "I sang. I was a little sad, and I sang because of that."

She crept nearer to me over the turf, resting her two hands upon the ground as she leaned forward. And she looked up, very sober and wide-eyed, into my grim face.

"Is that why you—did not sleep?" she asked, half-whispering. "Is that why your face is—so to-day? *She* must have sung that song, the other Sylvia. Yes," said she, nodding to herself, "*she* must have sung it. That is why— Will you tell me," she asked, after a time, "what she was like—if it wouldn't be a pain to you, that is. Will you tell me about her?"

"Tell you about her?" said I, taking desperate refuge in my old, sneering harshness; "there's nothing to tell. She was like every other woman," I lied, bitterly.

"Was she—beautiful?" asked the new Sylvia.

"I expect she thought so," said I. "They all do."

"And her—hair?" begged the new Sylvia.

"Yellow," said I, sneering. "Straw-color, brass-color. Any chemist might have fixed her out."

"Oh, gold, gold!" cried the new Sylvia, in a hurt voice.

"And blue eyes," said I, savagely.

"Dolls have them, also, I believe—and a voice that—a voice that— Oh, child, child, she was like you! She was the sweetest, kindest, loveliest thing that God ever loosed to wander a little while here below; the tenderest, the dearest! I tell you, she was like you! You might be her younger sister. You laugh, and a man's heart shakes in his breast. You weep, and he'd die for you—die to save you a tear. Why did you come to my river to trouble me? I was happy—almost. I had forgotten, and you have made me remember. I had buried my heart, and laid a stone over it. Why need you push the stone away, just to see what was under? I had put love and beauty, and all such, behind me forever. Why need you come to flaunt them in my face, and then—leave me alone with my bitterness? Ah, you're too beautiful to be cruel, Sylvia, Sylvia!"

But the new Sylvia rose to his feet, very pale and trembling a little. And she would not let me see her eyes, but turned away. I remember that she held one hand at her breast, as if something hurt her there. And she went over to the hedge, faltering a bit in her steps, and held by it with one

hand, as if it gave her a certain protection.

"I—must go," she said, in a little, breathless voice; "I must be—going. You were—very good—to let me—come." She held her eyes away from me.

Then, I took a long, deep breath, and, mercifully, some control came when I most had need of it, so that I was able to walk to the wrecked gate in the hedge, and to stand beside it, bowing. Only, I dared not look at her.

"Why, then, good-bye," said I. "Good-bye—Sylvia; I have frightened you and hurt you. Will you forgive me for that? I—had a bad night, and I was weak this morning. Forgive me; I should have known how it was. I think I was mad. Even an old man of two-and-forty has his madnesses, child. Forget them, if you can. You have been playing and teasing and whiling away your mornings. Alas, it is so long since I last played that I had forgotten the rules. Forgive me!"

I pulled the broken gate aside for her to pass; but Sylvia turned, with a sudden little sobbing cry, and threw herself upon my breast, holding me by the shoulders.

I have discovered that my uneasiness in the matter of the imperfectly concealed bows of ribbon arose from a misapprehension. It appears that they were meant to be seen. When I spoke of it—as delicately as possible—to Sylvia, she laughed till she had to sit down on the grass.

HIS AWFUL PREDICAMENT

FIRST RUSSIAN NOBLEMAN—Great Scottovich! What is the matterskoff with the archbishopski? He seems to be having a fitovich!

SECOND RUSSIAN NOBLEMAN—Oh, the Grand Dukeski Ivan Alexandervich Kutmynoseoff is about to marry the second daughter of the Grand Duchess Andabulosia of Schkinkenburg-Katzenblatter, the Duchess Anastasia Venna Pauline Celesta; and the clergyman, who stammerskoffs, has got several of the names stuck crosswiseovich in his throatski.

THROUGH SLUMBER GATE

COULD she but know the dream I send
 To her white bed to-night,
 The road o' sleep, from end to end,
 Would blossom with delight.

And tenderly this dream of mine
 Should lead through Slumber Gate,
 In pathways delicate and fine,
 To that far place I wait.

Why is it that the nights go on,
 And still I stay alone
 Between the darkness and the dawn,
 Sick-hearted for my own?

Perchance, my dream came not to her,
 Or loitered until day;
 Perchance, she mocked my messenger,
 And flouted it away.

Ah, well, I only know I wait
 Until that night may be,
 When she shall slip through Slumber Gate,
 And laugh and run with me.

JOHN WINWOOD.



SHE KNOWS HER BUSINESS

THE YOUTH—Ah, darling, you are the first woman I ever loved!

THE BLASÉ BEAUTY—Kiss me, dear, and don't be discouraged—there's
 a first time for everything.



NO BUMP OF CAUTION

PRUDENCE—I should hate to go riding in Freddy Richly's auto—he's
 always running over some one.

PRUNELLA—Yes, it must be terribly bumpy riding!



FORTUNE no longer knocks at a man's door; she presses the button, and
 expects him to do the rest.

THE SHADOWY PAST

By James Branch Cabell

"MORNING, Teddy." Mrs. Wade rustled to her seat at the breakfast-table, with a certain shortness of breath that was partly due to the stairs, and partly to a Paquin creation that fitted a trifle too perfectly. "Waffles? At my age and weight the first is an experiment, and the fifth an amiable indiscretion of which I am always guilty. Sugar, please?" She yawned, half-heartedly, and reached—with discreet deliberation—a generously proportioned arm, clad in a very tight and very fluffy sleeve, toward the sugar-bowl. "That will do, Wilkins."

Mr. Anstruther raised his fine eyes toward the chandelier, and sighed, as Wilkins, the demure and heelless, closed the door softly behind him. As he dawdled over his breakfast, dry, polite, a trifle ill at ease, the morning sunlight rendered him rather misty as to hair, and almost suspiciously well-preserved as to teeth; still, he was not unaware that a gracefully tempered display of emotion sat well enough on his somewhat brittle, somewhat sapless youthfulness, and that at this hour, though possibly premature, it was at least permissible, as the remainder of his house-party had already breakfasted.

"Alicia!" said he, softly, and with a lingering desire for candle-light.

Mrs. Wade partook of chops. "Is this remorse," she queried, "or a need of bromides? For, at this hour, it is difficult to distinguish between them."

"It is neither," said Mr. Anstruther, shortly.

There followed an interval of silence.

"Really," said Mrs. Wade, with

sympathy, "one would think you had at last been confronted with one of your thirty-seven pasts—or is it thirty-eight, Teddy?"

Mr. Anstruther frowned disapprovingly on her frivolity; then swallowed his coffee, and buttered a wholly superfluous potato. "H'm!" said he; "then you know?"

"I know," sighed she, "that a sleeping past frequently suffers from insomnia."

"In that case," said he, darkly, "it is not the only sufferer."

Mrs. Wade judiciously considered the attractions of a third waffle—a mellow blending of Autumnal yellows, fringed with a crisp and irresistible brown, that, for the moment, put to flight all dreams and visions of slenderness. "And Gabrielle?" she queried, with a considerable mental hiatus.

Mr. Anstruther flushed. "Gabrielle," he conceded, with mingled dignity and sadness, "is—twenty-three."

"Yes," said Mrs. Wade, with a dryness that might mean anything—or nothing; "she was only twenty-one when she married you."

"I mean," he explained, with obvious patience, "that at her age she—not unnaturally—takes a somewhat immature view of life. Her unspoiled purity," he added, meditatively, "and innocence and—er—general unsophistication are, of course, adorable, but I—I can admit to so old a friend, it is sometimes—er—deuced awkward."

"Gabrielle," said Mrs. Wade, soothingly, "has ideals. And ideals, like a harelip or a mission in life, should be pitied rather than condemned, when

our friends possess them; especially," she continued, buttering her waffle, "as so many women have them sandwiched between their last attack of measles and their first imported complexion. No one of the three is lasting, Teddy."

"H'm!" said he, scornfully, and trifling with a teaspoon.

There was a silence.

"H'm!" said she, with something of interrogation in her voice.

The teaspoon was cast aside. "See here, Alicia, I've known you——"

"You have not!" cried she, very earnestly, "not by five years!"

"Well, say for some time. You're a sensible woman——"

"A man," Mrs. Wade lamented, parenthetically, "never suspects a woman of discretion, until she begins to lose her waist."

"—and I am sure that I can rely on your womanly tact, and—er—finer instincts, and—er—that sort of thing, you know—to help me out of a—deuce of a mess." Mrs. Wade ate on, in an exceedingly non-committal fashion, as he paused, inquiringly. "She's been reading some letters," said he, at length; "some letters I wrote a long time ago."

"In the case of so young a girl," observed Mrs. Wade, with perfect comprehension, "I should have undoubtedly recommended a certain judicious supervision of her reading matter."

"She was looking through an old escritoire," he explained, desperately. "I didn't know what was in it. And the letters—why, just an affair such as any two sensible people might get into. It was years ago—and just the usual sort of thing, though it may have seemed from the letters— Why, I hadn't given the girl a thought," he cried, in virtuous indignation, "until Gabrielle found the letters—and read them!"

"Naturally," she assented, very placidly; "I read all of Theophilus's." The smile, with which she accompanied this remark, suggested that

both the late Mr. Wade's correspondence and home life were at times of an interesting nature.

"I—I had destroyed the envelopes, when she—er—returned them," continued Mr. Anstruther, with a fine confusion of persons. "Gabrielle doesn't even know who the girl was—her name, somehow, wasn't mentioned."

"'Woman of my heart'—'Dearest girl in all the world,'" quoted Mrs. Wade, reminiscently, "and such like tender phrases, scattered in with a pepper-cruet, after the rough copy was made in pencil, and dated just, 'Wednesday,' or 'Thursday,' of course. Ah, you were always very careful, Teddy," she sighed, a little wistfully; "and now that makes it all the worse, as—for all the internal evidence—the letters may have been returned yesterday." She laughed, but her laughter was not unkindly.

"Why—!" Mr. Anstruther pulled up short, hardly seeing his way clear through the indignant periods on which he had entered. "I declined," said he, somewhat lamely, "to discuss the matter with her, in her present excited and perfectly unreasonable condition."

Mrs. Wade's penciled eyebrows rose, and her lips—which were quite as red as there was any necessity for their being—twitched. "Hysterics?" she asked.

"Worse!" groaned Mr. Anstruther; "patient resignation under unmerited affliction!" He brought the teaspoon into service once more, and carefully balanced it upon his forefinger. "There were," said he, slowly, "certain phrases in these letters which were, somehow, repeated in certain letters I subsequently wrote to Gabrielle, and—not to put too fine a point upon it—she doesn't like it."

Mrs. Wade smiled, as though she considered this not entirely improbable; and he continued, with growing embarrassment and indignation: "She says there must have been others"—Mrs. Wade's smile grew

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reminiscent—"any number of others; that she is only—only an incident in my life. Er—as you have mentioned, Gabrielle has certain ideals which complicate matters. She won't listen to reason, and she won't come down-stairs—which," lamented Mr. Anstruther, plaintively, "is deuced awkward in a house-party." He drummed his fingers irresolutely, for a moment, on the table. "It is," he summed up, "a combination of Ibsen and hysterics—one law for the man and another for the woman, and a realization of the mistake we have both made—and all that sort of thing, you know. And she's taking menthol and green tea in bed, prior to—to—"

"Taking leave?" suggested Mrs. Wade.

"Er—that was mentioned, I believe," said Mr. Anstruther.

Mrs. Wade looked about her. Belle Haven, which Mrs. Anstruther inherited from her parents, is one of the prettiest places on Long Island, and, without, the clean-shaven lawns and trim box-hedges were very beautiful in the morning sunlight; within, the same sunlight sparkled over the heavy breakfast-service, and gleamed mysteriously in the high, wooden panels of the breakfast-room. She viewed the luxury about her a little wistfully, for Mrs. Wade's purse was not over-full. "Of course," said she, meditatively, "there was the money."

"Yes," said Mr. Anstruther, very slowly; "there was the money." He sprang to his feet suddenly, and drew himself erect. "See, here, Alicia; my marriage may have been an eminently sensible one, but I love my wife. Oh, believe me, I love her very tenderly, poor little Gabrielle! I've knocked about the world, and I've done much as other men do, and all that—there have been flirtations and such like, and—er—some women have been kinder to me than I've deserved. But I love her; there hasn't been a moment since she came into my life I haven't loved her, and been—" he waved his hands, impotently,

almost theatrically—"sickened at the thought of the others."

Mrs. Wade's foot tapped the floor somewhat impatiently, as he spoke. When he had made an ending, she inclined her head toward him. "Thank you!" said Mrs. Wade, very gravely, though afterward she smiled.

Mr. Anstruther bit his lip, and flushed. "That," said he, softly, "was different."

But the difference, whatever may have been its nature, was lost on Mrs. Wade, who was now rapt in meditation. She rested her ample chin on a much-bejeweled hand for a moment, and, when she raised it, her voice was free from the affectations that marred her usual speech. "There comes in every woman's life," she said, very slowly, "a time when she realizes, suddenly, that her husband has a past life; she never realizes that of her lover, somehow. But to know that your husband, the father of your child, has lived for other women a life in which you had no part, and never can have part!—she realizes that, at times, and—and it sickens her." Mrs. Wade smiled a little, as she echoed the phrase, but her eyes were not mirthful. "Ah, she hungers for those dead years, Teddy, and, though you devote your whole life to her, nothing, nothing can make up for them; and she always hates those shadowy women who have stolen them from her. A woman never, at heart, forgives another woman who has loved her husband, even though she cease to care for him herself. For she remembers—ah, you men forget so easily, Teddy! God had not invented memory when He created Adam; it was kept for the woman."

Then ensued a pause, during which Mr. Anstruther smiled down upon her, somewhat irresolutely; for he abhorred a scene, and to him her present manner bordered upon both the scenic and the incomprehensible. "Ah!—you women!" he temporized.

There was a swift, upward glance from eyes whose luster time and late hours had conspired to dim. "Ah!

—you men!" retorted Mrs. Wade. "And there we have the tragedy of life in a nutshell!"

Mr. Anstruther, rebuffed, strolled toward a window, where he fidgeted for a moment with the blind; then turned, reproachfully. "We've always been such good friends," said he, half in appeal.

"Yes." Mrs. Wade was playing with the discarded teaspoon now, and a curious little smile hovered about her lips. "Do you remember, Teddy," said she, very slowly, "that evening at Lenox, when I wore a blue gown, and they were playing *Fleurs d'Amour*, and—and you said—?"

"Yes"—there was an effective little catch in his voice—"you were a wonderful girl, Alicia—'my sunshine girl,' I used to call you. And blue was always your color; it went with your eyes so exactly that night; and those big sleeves they wore then—those tell-tale, crushable sleeves!—suited your slender youthfulness so perfectly! Ah, I remember as though it were yesterday!"

Mrs. Wade sprang to her feet. "It was pink!" cried she, indignantly. "And it was at Newport you said—what you said! And—and you don't deserve anything but—but what you're getting," she concluded, grimly.

"I—it was so long ago," Mr. Anstruther apologized, with mingled discomfort and vagueness.

"Yes," she conceded, rather sadly; "it was long—oh, so long ago! We were young then, and we believed in things, and—and Theophilus wasn't discovered." She sighed, and drummed her fingers idly on the table. "I'll help you, though, Teddy, for you've shown me the way. You don't deserve it in the least, but I'll do it."

II

Thus it shortly came about that Mrs. Wade mounted, in meditative mood, to Mrs. Anstruther's rooms; and,

recovering her breath, entered, without knocking, into a gloom where cologne and menthol and the odor of warm rubber contended for the mastery. For Mrs. Anstruther had decided that she was very ill indeed, and was sobbing softly to herself in bed.

Very calmly, Mrs. Wade opened a window, letting in a flood of fresh air and sunshine; very calmly, she drew a chair—a substantial arm-chair—to the bedside, and, very calmly, she began:

"My dear, Teddy has told me of this ridiculous affair, and—oh, you equally ridiculous girl!"

She removed, with deft fingers, a damp and clinging bandage from about Mrs. Anstruther's head, and patted the back of her hand, placidly. Mrs. Anstruther was by this time sitting erect in bed, and her dark hair was thick about her face, which was colorless; and, altogether, she was very rigid and very indignant and very beautiful and very, very young.

"How dare he tell you—or any one!" she cried.

"We are such old friends, remember," pleaded Mrs. Wade, and rearranged the pillows, soothingly, about her hostess; "and I wish to talk to you quietly and quite sensibly."

Mrs. Anstruther sank back among the pillows, and inhaled the fresh air, which, in spite of herself, she found very pleasant. "I—somehow, I don't feel very sensible," she murmured, half sulky and half shamefaced.

Mrs. Wade hesitated for a moment, and then plunged into the heart of things. "You are a woman now, dear," said she, very gently, "though heaven knows it seems only yesterday you were playing about the nursery—and one of the facts we women must face, eventually, is that, at heart, man is always a polygamous animal. It is unfortunate, perhaps, but it is true. Civilization may veneer the fact, but it can never destroy it. There was never any man whose whole life was swayed by any one

woman. He may give her the best there is in him—his love, his trust, his life's work—but it is only the best there is left. Some other woman has had part of it—a part of it that can never be restored." Her voice was half pitiful, half defiant, as she glanced up from the floor for an instant, and continued, almost harshly: "A woman gives her heart all at once; men crumble theirs away, as one feeds bread to birds—a crumb to this woman, a crumb—such a little crumb, sometimes!—to the other. And his wife gets what there is left." Mrs. Wade smiled, though not very merrily. "All we women can do is to remember; we are credibly informed that half a loaf is better than no bread." Her face saddened, and she murmured, a little wistfully: "We might plan a better universe, we sister women, but that isn't left to us to do. We must take it as it is."

Mrs. Anstruther stirred, uneasily, as the voice died away. "I don't believe it," said she; and added, with emphasis: "And I do hate that—that creature!"

"You do believe it." Mrs. Wade's voice was insistent. "You know it. The knowledge is a legacy from your mother."

Mrs. Anstruther frowned, petulantly, and then burst into choking sobs. "Oh!" she cried, hopelessly, "she's—some woman—has had what I can never have—his first love! And I want it so!—that first love that means everything—the love he gave her when I was only a messy little girl, with pig-tails and too many hands and feet! Oh, that woman!—she's had everything—everything!"

There was an interval, during which Mrs. Wade smiled crookedly, and Mrs. Anstruther continued to sob. Then, Mrs. Wade lifted the packet of letters lying on the bed, and cleared her throat, somewhat scornfully. "H'm!" said she; "so this is what caused all the trouble? You don't mind?" And, considering silence as

equivalent to assent, she drew out a letter at hazard, and read aloud:

"Just a line, woman of all the world, to tell you . . . but what have I to tell you, after all? Only the old, old message, so often told that it seems scarce worth while to bother the postman about it. Just three words that innumerable dead lips have whispered, while life was yet good and old people were unreasonable and skies were blue—three words that our unborn children's children shall whisper to one another when we too have gone to help the grasses in their growing or to swell the victorious, swaying hosts of some field of daffodils. Just three words—that is my message to you, my lady. . . . Ah, it is weary waiting for a sight of your dear face through these long days that are all so much alike and all so empty and colorless! My heart grows hungry as I think of your great, green eyes and of the mouth that is like a little wound. I want you so, my lady! I want you. . . . Ah, time travels very slowly that brings you back at last to me, and, meanwhile, I can but dream of you and send you impotent scrawls that only vex me with their futility. For my desire of you—"

"The remainder," said Mrs. Wade, clearing her throat once more, "appears to consist of insanity and improper sentiments, in about equal proportions, and expressed in a very dangerous manner."

During the reading, Mrs. Anstruther, leaning on one elbow, had regarded her companion, with wide eyes and flushed cheeks. "You see!" she cried, indignantly; "he loved her!"

"Yes." Mrs. Wade replaced the letter, carefully, almost caressingly, among its companions. "My dear, it was years ago. I think, time has by now wreaked a vengeance far more bitter than you could ever plan on this woman, who, after all, never thought to wrong you. For the bitterest of all bitter things to a woman—to some women, at least—is to grow old." She sighed, and her well-manicured fingers fretted for a moment with the counterpane. "Ah, who shall ever write the tragedy of a frivolous woman's middle-age—the middle-age of the pitiful butterfly-woman, whose life is all made up of worldly things, and whose mind can't—can't, because of its very nature—reach to anything higher! Middle-

age strips her of everything—the admiration, the flattery, the shallow merriment—all the little things that her little mind longs for—and other women take her place, in spite of her futile, pitiful efforts to remain young. And the world goes on as before, and there is a whispering in the Winter-garden, and young people steal off for wholly superfluous glasses of water, and the men give her duty dances, and she is old—ah, so old!—under the rouge and inane smiles and dainty fripperies that caricature her lost youth! Ah, my dear, you needn't envy this woman! Pity her, my dear!" pleaded Mrs. Wade, a certain note of earnestness in her voice.

"Such a woman," said Mrs. Anstruther, with startling distinctness, "deserves no pity."

"Well," Mrs. Wade conceded, drily, "she doesn't get it. Probably, because she always grows fat, from sheer lack of will-power to resist sloth and gluttony—the only agreeable vices left her; and, by no stretch of the imagination, can a fat woman be converted into either a pleasing or a heroic figure." Mrs. Wade paused for a moment, and smiled, though not very pleasantly. "It is, doubtless," said she, "a sight for gods—and men—to laugh at, this silly woman striving to regain a vanished waist. Yes, I suppose, it is amusing—but it's pitiful. And it's more pitiful still, if she has ever loved a man in the unreasonable way these shallow women sometimes do. Men age so slowly; the men a girl first knows are young long after she has reached middle-age—yes, they go on dancing cotillions and talking in Winter-gardens, long after she has taken to common-sense shoes. And the man is young still—and he cares for some other woman, who is young and has all that she has lost—and it seems so unfair!" said Mrs. Wade, wearily.

Mrs. Anstruther regarded her for a moment, with dry, alert eyes. "You—you know this woman?" she queried, in a curiously level voice.

"These letters"—Mrs. Wade tapped the packet idly, and Mrs. Anstruther noted with equal idleness how the flesh swelled angrily about her many rings—"were written to me."

"Preposterous!"

Mrs. Wade turned slowly toward the great mirror, that the morning wind had by now flecked with gray dust, and regarded it with incurious eyes. "It does seem so," said she, in a crisp voice; and then, lifting a handkerchief from her lap, disclosed yet another packet of letters, which she laid upon the bed. "I rather feared you would think so. Here are my letters—the answers to them. Oh, you are quite at liberty to read them."

This Mrs. Anstruther did, with flushed cheeks and trembling hands. There was an interval of silence, disturbed only by the rustling of paper. "With these letters—" began Mrs. Anstruther, harshly.

"Yes—you could drag my name in the mire, I dare say; but you won't," Mrs. Wade finished, with unconcern.

"You—you dare!" cried the younger woman.

"My dear," protested her companion, gently, "I am—as you see—an old friend of Teddy's, and I knew you in the nursery; was I to stand by and see you make a mountain of this boy-and-girl affair—an affair Teddy and I had practically forgotten—oh, years ago!—until to-day? Why—why, you *can't* be jealous of me!" Mrs. Wade concluded, half mockingly.

Mrs. Anstruther regarded her with deliberation; in the windy sunlight, Mrs. Wade was a well-preserved woman, but, unmistakably, preserved; moreover, there was a great deal of her, and her nose was in need of a judicious application of powder, of which there was a superfluity behind her ears. Was this the siren she had dreamed? Mrs. Anstruther perceived clearly that, whatever might have been her husband's relations with this woman, he had been manifestly entrapped into it—a victim to Mrs. Wade's inordinate love of attention,

which was, indeed, tolerably notorious; and her anger against him gave way to a rather contemptuous pity and a half-maternal remorse for not having taken better care of him.

"No," answered Mrs. Wade, to her unspoken thought; "no woman could be seriously jealous of me. Yes, I dare say, I am *passée* and vain and frivolous and—harmless. But," she added, meditatively, "you hate me, just the same."

"My dear Mrs. Wade—" began Mrs. Anstruther, with cool courtesy; then hesitated. "Yes," she said, very simply; "I dare say, it's unreasonable—but I hate you."

"Why, then," spoke Mrs. Wade, with the utmost cheerfulness, "everything is as it should be." She rose and smiled. "I'm sorry to say I must be leaving Belle Haven to-day; the Musgraves are very pressing, and I really don't know how to get out of paying them a visit—"

"So sorry to lose you," cooed Mrs. Anstruther; "but, of course, you know best. I believe some very good people are visiting the Musgraves now-days?" She extended both packets of letters, very blandly. "May I restore your—your property?" she queried, with the utmost gentleness.

"Thanks!" Mrs. Wade took them, and kissed her hostess, not without tenderness, on the brow. "My dear, be kind to Teddy. He—he's rather an attractive man, you know, and—and other women are kind to him."

"I will." Mrs. Anstruther's manner of saying this rather implied that her kindness would be tempered with a certain watchfulness. However, she smiled up at her guest, brightly. "Pray pardon my behavior in this—this absurd affair," said she.

"Don't mention it," said Mrs. Wade.

III

MR. ANSTRUTHER had smoked a preposterous number of unsatisfactory cigarettes on the piazza of Belle Haven, while Mrs. Wade was absent

on her mission; and, on her return, flushed and triumphant, he rose in eloquent silence.

"I've done it, Teddy," said Mrs. Wade.

"Done what?" he queried, blankly.

"Restored what my incomprehensible lawyers call the *status quo*; achieved peace with honor; carried off the spoils of war; and—in short—arranged everything," answered Mrs. Wade, and sank into a rustic chair, which creaked alarmingly. "And all," she added, bringing a fan into play, "by telling her the letters were written to me."

"My word!" said Mr. Anstruther; "your methods of restoring domestic peace to a distracted household are, to say the least, original!" He seated himself, and lighted another cigarette. "Even if she believed it—" he began, uncertainly.

"Oh, she believed it right enough!" laughed Mrs. Wade. "You see, I showed her these—the answers to them. There's such a shocking similarity about your affairs, Teddy," she continued, lightly, as she handed him the second packet, "that my letters fitted in beautifully."

Mr. Anstruther inspected the packet with a puzzled surprise, that deepened as he recognized its contents. "You have kept them—ever since they were returned?" he queried, with courteous interest.

"Ah!" returned Mrs. Wade, "was there ever an old—well, a middle-aged woman, who had not preserved these souvenirs of her youth to look over at times? Ah, we are very old now, Teddy, and we go in to dinner with the toupeted colonels, and are interested in charitable enterprises; but there was a time when we were young and not exactly repulsive in appearance, and men did many mad things for our sakes, and we never lose the memory of that. Pleasant memories are among the many privileges of women. Yes," added Mrs. Wade, meditatively, "we derive much the same pleasure from them a cripple does in rearranging the athletic medals he has won,

or a starving man in thinking of the many good dinners he has eaten; but we can't—and wouldn't—part with them, nevertheless."

Mr. Anstruther, however, had not honored her with much attention, and was quietly puzzling over the more or less incomprehensible situation; and, perceiving this, she ran on, after a little: "Oh, it worked—it worked beautifully! You see, she would always have been very jealous of that other woman; but with me, it's different. She's always known me as I am—a frivolous and—say, corpulent, for it's a more dignified word—and generally unattractive chaperon; and she can't think of me as ever having been anything else. Young people never really believe in their elder's youth; Teddy; at heart, they think we came into the world with crow's feet and pepper-and-salt hair, all complete. So, she's only sorry for you now—rather as a mother would be for a naughty child; as for me, she isn't jealous—but," sighed Mrs. Wade, "she isn't overfond of me."

Mr. Anstruther rose to his feet. "It isn't fair," said he, very slowly; "the—the letters were distinctly compromising. It isn't fair you should shoulder the blame for a woman you never saw; it isn't fair you should be placed in such a false position."

"What matter?" pleaded Mrs. Wade. "The letters are mine to burn, if I choose. Gabrielle will say nothing; she'll hate me, but she'll say nothing—especially to you," she added, slowly.

"Still—" began Mr. Anstruther.

"Ah, Teddy, if I want to do a foolish thing; won't you let me? What else is a woman for? They're always doing foolish things. I've known a woman to throw a man over, because she had seen him without his collar; and I've known another to actually marry a man, because she happened to be in love with him; I've known a woman to go on wearing pink organdie after she had passed forty, and I've known a woman to go on caring for a man who, she knew,

wasn't worth caring for, long after he had forgotten. We aren't brave and sensible, like you men. Ah, Teddy, let me be foolish, if I want to be!"

"If," said Mr. Anstruther, in some perplexity, "I understand one word of this farrago, I'll be—qualified in various ways."

"You don't have to understand," she pleaded.

"You mean—?" he asked.

"I mean I'm a woman, and I understand. Everything is as it should be, as it stands. Don't undo my work; it will only mean trouble and dissatisfaction and giving up all this"—she waved her hand lightly over the lawns of Belle Haven—"and it will mean our giving you up, for, you know, you haven't any money of your own, Teddy. Ah, Teddy, we can't give you up; we need you to lead our cotillions, and tell us naughty little stories, and keep us amused. Be sensible, Teddy!"

Mr. Anstruther was not unmoved by her argument. "After all," said he, judicially, "women are the best judges of women. It is not my desire to imperil Gabrielle's happiness—far from it. And, after all, any action on my part will necessarily entail the reopening of a very disagreeable subject, which, you assure me, is now closed. So, if you are sure we shall hear no more of the matter—"

"Perfectly sure," protested Mrs. Wade.

"—why, then—"

"Why, then," said she, "it is settled; and I am heartily glad of it."

There was an interval of meditation.

"In the name of heaven," queried Mr. Anstruther, laughing, "why have you pursued this extraordinary course?"

"You—you don't know?" she asked, in turn.

"I?" said he, blankly.

"You really don't know?" But Mr. Anstruther's face declared very plainly that he did not. "Well!" meditated Mrs. Wade, "I dare say, it's best, on the whole, you shouldn't."

And now you really must excuse me, for I'm leaving for the Musgraves' to-day, and I sha'n't ever be invited to Belle Haven again, and I must tell my maid to pack up. She's a little fool, and she'll break her heart over leaving Wilkins. Allowing ample time for her to dispose of my *lingerie* and her

lamentations, I ought to make the six, forty-five. I'll see you on the links though, Teddy, in an hour; they tell me, golf sometimes does wonders in reducing one's weight, and, if I can't help being old, I—at least, I must try to help being fat," said Mrs. Wade.



COURONNE MARINE

J'AI jeté des fleurs dans la mer farouche,
Mon amour défunt dort au fond des flots;
Roule, ô vaste mer, cherche bien sa couche,
Porte lui mes fleurs avec des sanglots.

Sois lui douce, ô mer, et berce son rêve,
Qu'il repose en paix sur ton sein grondeur.
Moi, je suis rivée aux rocs de la grève,
Et mon amour dort dans tes profondeurs.

CARMEN SYLVA.



HOW SHE FELT

MRS. BLACK—Sam Johnson done left his wife 'bout six mont's ago.

MR. BLACK—Do she t'ink he am nebbah comin' back?

"Wal, she jest beginnin' to hab hopes."



AN AUTO'S SPEED FOR AN HOUR

CHAUFFEUR'S private opinion	12 miles
Chauffeur's opinion for his friends	20 "
Policeman's private opinion	14 "
Policeman's opinion for the judge	28 "
Old lady's opinion, who was knocked down	50 "
Actual speed	8 "

HAROLD JANSMAILL.



IT is a good thing to have a good opinion of one's self, but it is not necessarily a better thing to have a better opinion.

THE REBUFF

HER blood was the bluest of blue,
But he was a parvenu,
And he wore a celluloid cuff.
Yet he never exactly knew
Why she flung him off, in a huff,
That moonlight night on the bluff.

She seemed so gentle and true,
So gracious and yielding she grew,
As the swift, sweet moments flew,
How could he foresee a rebuff,
When over her shoulder he threw
A fold of her shawl, which he drew
About her, to shield from the dew
Her fair neck, there on the bluff?
For the moon was misty with dew,
And the air was chill, on the bluff.

The garment about her he drew,
Just rumpling the edge of her ruff,
Just grazing her cheek with his cuff;
When, sudden and sharp as a shrew,
With a haughty, contemptuous snuff,
"That's enough!" she exclaimed, "quite enough!"—
Broke the spell he could never renew,
And, faster than feet could pursue,
Up the moon-flecked terraces flew,
And disappeared over the bluff;
Never deigning a word of adieu,
Left him mute and amazed on the bluff.

"I say, but that's awfully rough!"
He mused, as she vanished from view.
"It appears that she thinks I'm a muff,
But that's nothing new, if it's true,"
(He was rather afraid it was true!)—
"Then why so abrupt a rebuff?
Why take to her heels, in a huff?"

It was something he never just knew,
But I'll whisper the secret to you:
She had scented the celluloid cuff!
For her blood was the bluest of blue,
While he was a parvenu,
A swell in a celluloid cuff.

J. T. TROWBRIDGE.

THE WHITE CARNATION

By Francis Livingston

ON the night that was to have been my last on earth, I made as careful a toilette as though I had been going to a dinner-dance or to the opera. Indeed, I had half decided to go to the latter place. It depended on what they were singing, and how far my money would carry me.

I had just twenty dollars and a little silver in my pocket-book. That was all I had in the world—all that was left of the \$40,000 which I had in January, when Edgar Brandon took me into his office, in the Broad Exchange Building.

No, I was not fleeced by Edgar; he was the best friend I ever had, if I had only known enough to appreciate the fact.

But I had tried to be a plunger. I thought Ned was too slow, and, even after my folly had been brought home to me a half-dozen times—after my own money was almost exhausted—I had persisted in being a fool.

Ned had given me a last, solemn warning, but there came a chance to recoup—ah, it was such a sure thing, that tip of George Ellery's on North Eastern! I bought heavily. I was acting quite within my rights, I told myself, in signing the firm's name to the cheques, and how pleased Ned would be!

Then there came that crash of which everybody knows—and all who were long on North Eastern remember it bitterly.

Ned acted like a gentleman. He took up all the cheques, and made no fuss. But the next day, with a look I can never forget, he said: "Felton,

this ends things between you and me. I never wish to see your face again until I have forgotten what you have done, and that will not be in a hurry, I can promise you."

That was all.

I tried it alone, but fared very ill.

I fancied that my dealings when with Brandon were being talked about, and that some of the men on the curb shunned me. It was my imagination, maybe. I think the truth was that I despised myself.

I had my name removed from the waiting list of Brandon's club, where he had placed it, to save my being black-balled. After a little while, I resigned from my own club.

All this would not have been so bad, had I had any money. I had been used to money and to luxurious living all my life. But I had no funds, nor did I know of a way to obtain any.

And now I was down to my last dollar, or what amounted to the same thing.

I had figured out just what I was to do. There should be a modest little dinner, at a quiet French restaurant I knew, a few cigars, a cab, of course, and an orchestra-chair at the Metropolitan.

I would take another cab after the opera, for I had about settled upon the East River. It was a more vague, a more mysterious region than the North River, which was too familiar, I thought. I remembered, from long ago, certain rocks at the water's edge on the East Side. I would drive over there and dismiss the cab.

Then there would be a tall figure standing on the rocks, smoking a

cigar, and gazing gloomily at the dark water below. The cigar burns to the end; a clock somewhere strikes midnight; the tall figure leaps out and down into the darkness—and that is the last of Richard Felton.

I really felt very sorry for myself, as I put on my evening coat; and sorry for Edgar, too, when he should hear of my death.

As I knotted my tie before the mirror, I noticed something on the left lapel of my coat. I had not had it on for several weeks, and there were two moth-holes in the cloth. That was a slight matter to annoy a man about to die, but annoy me it did; I had never been shabby in my life, and I did not wish to go out on this last evening in a shabby coat. But I saw no help for it; I had no other coat.

I went out on the street, still thinking of those two moth-holes. As I passed a florist's window, I had an idea. I went into the shop, and bought a large, white, double carnation, which I pinned on the lapel in a manner to conceal the defects.

I went to the restaurant, and ate my dinner, smoking a good cigar afterward, while I leisurely watched the other diners—several couples and two or three merry parties.

At about half-past eight o'clock, I took a cab, and drove to the Metropolitan. I chose a four-wheeler in preference to a hansom. I wished to be comfortable, to stretch my legs and smoke.

I found the opera was "Tristan und Isolde." This did not suit me at all. It was too big—too remote. The tragedy was so stupendous, I think I fancied my own would seem small in comparison.

And then the house would be dark, and I did not wish that. To-night, I wished to see beautiful women with flashing jewels—to hear the frou-frou of silken garments, to inhale perfumes suggesting luxury and wealth—to move in the surroundings that had once been mine by right.

"Traviata" or even "Il Barbiere"

would have done, but the thought of that great, lonely *Isolde*, pouring out her mighty *Liebestodt* in the gloom, made me shudder.

"Drive up the Avenue!" I called to the man. I should have liked to go to a ball—a masque would have suited me best. Oh, heaven, how I craved gaiety, light and laughter to-night! I had had such a surfeit of sadness.

I thought of all the women I knew, and dismissed the idea of calling on any one of them. Alice Lazarre I thought of last of all. It would sadden me to go there. I had not seen her for three months. Would she be shocked to-morrow, when she heard? Bah! I wondered if all suicides were not stupid egotists.

Some of the houses on the Avenue were shrouded in gloom. There were lights in the windows of others. All looked equally forbidding. There was none that held a welcome for me.

This would not do. Time was slipping away. I looked at my watch—ten o'clock. I heard sounds of music and, from the darkness ahead, there loomed a great house ablaze with light. As we drew nearer, I saw many carriages. Gaily-dressed women alighted from them, and ascended the steps.

"Drive around into the side street, and stop at the end of the line of carriages there," I said to the man.

I got out, and walked slowly around, past the entrance. It seemed to me I should know who lived here. I looked at the neighboring houses, and gradually, I remembered. It was a wealthy steel man—a "magnate," the papers called him—lately come from the West. He had a wife with social aspirations, and a daughter who was said to be beautiful. What was the name?—ah, yes, Sammis.

I did not know them, but that made no difference. My resolve was taken. The sight of all those women and men, crowding up the steps, acted like a tonic upon me, and gave me courage to do a reckless thing. I would go into that house for an hour, and mingle among the guests as one of them.

Without a moment's hesitation, I mounted the steps, and entered. A page, in livery, stood at the door of the drawing-room, announcing the guests. I gave him my name, and almost expected to see the people turn in surprise, as the boy called out, "Mr. Richard Felton"; but no one did so.

I walked up to two ladies standing in the centre of the room, and bowed to them. I heard their conventional murmur of pleasure, but did not dare look at their faces. Then I moved away, giving place to others, and looked about me.

The great rooms were furnished with magnificence, but there was nothing to offend good taste. Everywhere were flowers. An orchestra was playing somewhere in the hall. I saw no familiar face in the crowd.

I became conscious that some one was looking hard at me. I glanced leisurely in the direction from which I felt the stare to come, and saw a stout, red-faced, old gentleman with white chin-whiskers. It was Sammis. I recognized him instantly from the newspaper pictures. Uncomfortable as I felt, to be suspected thus early, I met his gaze boldly for a moment. Then other people came between us, and I moved away.

Decidedly, I must bestir myself, and, at least, appear to know some people, otherwise my adventure was like to end quickly. Yet, I felt my spirits rising, in spite of the danger of ridicule or humiliation.

The thought of approaching any of the women was distasteful, but, suddenly, my eye was caught by a short, stockily-built man, with sandy hair, wearing an ill-fitting evening coat, on the left lapel of which was pinned a white carnation. This recalled my own floral adornment. The sandy-haired man and I were the only men present who wore flowers. I wondered if his coat was moth-eaten. Then I strolled across the room toward him. I fancied he looked somewhat frightened as he saw me approaching, and this put me more at my ease.

"My friend," I said, smiling, "you and I alone, of all the company, it seems, are wearing white carnations."

He looked at me quickly, came a little closer, and made, I thought, a very odd reply.

"Love before all," he said, and he stammered over the words. Then he looked as though he were sorry he had said them.

"I echo the sentiment," I replied, laughing. "It is an admirable one—while the love lasts." On second thought, I asked, "Is that the 'language' of the flower we wear?"

The sandy-haired man did not reply. He was looking at me, very dubiously. "I did not expect to see you here," he said, at length.

"My meeting with you is an equally unlooked-for pleasure," I replied, lightly.

"May I ask who you are?"

"Certainly. My name is Felton."

"Why do you wear that flower?"

"Ah—for a private reason."

"Are you a friend of hers?"

"There are not too many who would call me by that name just now," I said; "if you will tell me which particular she you refer to—"

"If it is the one I mean, you needn't be afraid to mention her name to me."

"But I must be cautious, as well as you."

Now, all this was only idle chatter on my part, simply to supply myself with occupation, that Sammis's suspicions might be allayed.

The mysterious red-haired man was mildly amusing, too, but, when he asked, "Do you know of the accident to Chase?" I felt some irritation.

"My friend," I answered, "you are much better at interrogating than at answering, but I'll reply to that question. I know all about the accident to Chase. I know all about everything—why you wear a white carnation, and all."

He stared at me incredulously, for a minute, and then said: "In that case, what are you going to do?"

As he spoke, I looked over his head

and into the eyes of a tall, beautiful young woman, who was regarding me intently. I could have sworn she smiled—certainly, her eyes looked an invitation.

"I am going to bid you good evening," I said to the red-haired man, and moved away in the direction of the lady.

As I approached her, something told me this was Sammis's daughter. There was even a faint likeness in the curve of her red lips to the mouth of the old man. Both expressed a powerful will and courage indomitable.

I fancied she grew a shade paler, and her eyes swept the room. I, also, gave a hurried glance about. Sammis was not visible.

I was quite near her now, and suddenly she leaned forward, and whispered:

"The white carnation!"

My reply must have been an inspiration. "Love before all!" I whispered back.

She flushed, beautifully. "Mr. Chase?" she murmured.

"Mr. Chase has met with an accident," I said, in a low voice.

Her face expressed blank dismay. "And you—you come in his place?—you are from Mr. Brandon?"

It was my turn to look at her blankly.

"From Edgar Brandon?" I stammered.

"Certainly," she said, with some impatience; "has anything happened to Edgar? Speak quickly."

"No, nothing; and I am his friend."

She looked greatly relieved, and, as she moved away slowly, she whispered:

"Come to the conservatory in half an hour; I shall be there, and we can talk freely."

With what eagerness I looked about for the red-haired man! His mystery, which I had thought rather stupid at first, now held the strongest fascination for me—it seemed to be her mystery, too.

I saw he had crossed the room, and was standing near the door. I went

over to him, and drew him into the hall. The orchestra was playing softly, and I got him behind a palm tree.

"Now tell me everything," I said. "You must excuse my rudeness a while ago. Edgar Brandon is my best friend; I will do anything to serve him. You have just seen Miss Sammis speak with me. I swear you may trust me."

"They are to elope this evening, Brandon and she," he replied; "but you must know that. Chase, Brandon's friend, was to have come here half an hour before the time, enter the house as one of the guests, help her to escape through the conservatory window, and get her to the carriage. He is a stranger to Miss Sammis, and the sign was to be a white carnation. The pass-word I have already given you. Chase sprained his ankle badly, this afternoon. He can't walk. Brandon was desperate. He asked me to come in Chase's place. I can tell you one thing, though: I don't like the job; and I'll tell you another: unless I'm greatly mistaken, the old man——"

He stopped suddenly, his eyes looking past me. I turned and saw "the old man" at my elbow.

"May I speak to you a moment?" he asked.

I bowed, and he led the way down the hall, through the dining-room and beyond it to a small room.

He closed the door, and, turning, stood regarding me with compressed lips.

I felt very uncomfortable.

"May I ask your name?" he said, at length.

"Felton," I replied, promptly.

"I do not think I have met you before, have I?"

I was vexed beyond measure at this inopportune discovery. I cast about in my mind for some wild tale to account for my presence in the house. I had almost determined to throw myself upon his hospitality—anything to gain another hour.

Meanwhile, I had answered, "no," to his question.

"Then, if I make a mistake, you must pardon me. Are you not one of the men from the Central Office?"

I could have shouted aloud with glee. I was taken for a detective.

"I am, sir," I answered.

"I recognized your friend as coming from there, but I was not sure of you, until I saw you talking to him just now. You look like a gentleman."

He was delightful, this old man, and my heart really warmed toward him. The smile, with which I answered him, was genuine.

"There are four of you here, are there not?" he asked.

"There are, sir."

"Well, three will be enough to watch those gim-cracks in there," jerking his head toward the drawing-room; "I have a much more important matter I am going to intrust to you. Look at this."

He held a bit of paper toward me. I took it, and read:

Shall be at the corner of Madison avenue with the carriage at eleven. C. will be in the house half an hour earlier. Aid him in playing his part. Courage, my dearest one. Love before all.

E.

I frowned over the paper, and shook my head, sagely.

"This," continued the old man, "was brought me this evening by my daughter's maid. It comes from a blackguard named Brandon—Edgar Brandon, whom I have forbidden the house. He intends to run away with my girl to-night—under my nose. I mean to stop the business."

"And you wish my services in the matter?" I asked.

"I do. I wish you not to let her out of your sight. I'd like to catch her in the very act of running away, and, if it wasn't for the scandal it would make, I'd drag her back and humiliate her before her guests. I wish to teach the minx such a lesson as will forever prevent her attempting such a thing again. As for the man—" He stopped, his jaw closing like a trap, and his mouth looking very ugly.

My heart was rapidly cooling toward Mr. Sammis. I studied the paper critically, while I did some rapid thinking.

My plan began to unfold itself—incompletely, as yet—but one stroke, a bold one, I decided upon now.

"Who is the 'C.' referred to in the note?" I asked.

"That I do not know," he replied.

"Then I think I can inform you," I said, in an assured tone.

"You—how is that?"

"You are a very shrewd man, Mr. Sammis, to have recognized me as a detective so quickly," I replied; "you are the first who has ever done so on an occasion like this." The old fox was not averse to a little flattery; I saw his iron jaw relax. "Where your keenness is at fault is in regard to our friend with the sandy hair, whom we left in the hall. Such a man could not come from the Central Office. Look at his nervous fingers, his anxious eyes. I spotted him right away as a suspect, and entered into conversation with him. I had just learned his name was Carruthers, when you came up. This note makes it clear. He is the 'C.' referred to. My belief is he has had the boldness to enter your house, in the guise of a guest, for the purpose of helping your daughter to get away."

"God save us," cried Sammis, "but you are a clever one! Upon my soul, I believe you are right."

"I am certain of it," I answered. "Now, this requires careful handling. First, I must ask what your wishes are. Do you wish this man Carruthers put out of the house, and the whole business stopped at once?"

"By no means—not at all! I wish to catch them in the act of running away. Stop her on the sidewalk, on the way to the rascal's carriage, if possible. I wish to leave no loophole for any lies or explanations."

"Then I know just how to act. Do you put the matter in my hands?"

"Absolutely."

I was beginning to like him again.

"The first thing I shall do will be

to make an excuse for speaking to your daughter. Perhaps I may get a point from her, perhaps not; that depends. At any rate, Carruthers, after seeing us talking together, can easily be persuaded that I am a friend of Brandon's—now that you have given me his name—and so play right into our hands."

"Capital! Suppose I present you to my daughter?"

"My dear sir," I said, deprecatingly; "that would be to spoil everything. I have my own methods. Trust all to me."

A few minutes afterward, I sauntered up to Miss Sammis in the drawing-room. "Stand here a few minutes as though chatting with me," I said, "then lead the way to the conservatory. It will be all right. You need not fear to be observed."

One of the artists from the opera had just risen to sing, and the guests were bestowing themselves to listen. We left the room quietly.

When we stood facing each other in the conservatory, I said, gently:

"You have need of all your courage. I have just left your father. Your maid has played you false and has given him Edgar's note, sent you today. He thinks I am a detective, and has told me everything. I am supposed to be watching you."

She turned very pale, but her mouth, a moment ago so soft and smiling, was now firm as Sammis's own.

"The woman must have stolen other letters, then. This explains my being watched so closely, of late."

"Will you tell me what your father has against Brandon?"

"At first, it was only an absurd ambition for me to make what he calls a brilliant match. Then, Edgar met with some loss in his business. The amount was exaggerated, but my father believed the worst. It was then that he became very bitter against Edgar."

She had unwittingly dealt me a hard blow, and I reddened under it.

I, then, was the indirect cause of her unhappiness.

"I do not know who you are," said the poor girl, "but I must trust you—I do trust you."

"You do well," I said, "for, indeed, it is necessary. Listen, Miss Sammis. I shall not stop to explain my presence here, for we have a bold game to play, and time is precious. Only, believe this: Edgar Brandon was once a dear friend of mine. I am still his friend, though not now in his favor. To be restored to it, I will stop at nothing. You, who love him so, can understand this feeling, can you not?"

Her eyes grew beautifully soft and tender, as she bent her head.

"It is now nearly eleven o'clock, and Edgar must be outside. Where is your maid?"

"She was to wait for me under this window." She ran toward it, and looked out. "The girl is not there," she said.

"Now, this is what you are to do. Go up-stairs and send the maid down with your things to the appointed place. Have her wear a long, dark cloak, with a hood, if possible. Has she such a garment? Good. You yourself bring a wrap, light in color, something distinctively yours. First, though, show me how to reach the yard through the rear of the house."

I followed her out through dimly-lighted rooms to a hall, from which a side-door opened.

"This leads to the yard," she said.

I opened it, and looked out on the dark space, about twelve feet wide, and on the line of carriages across the street.

"Now return to the drawing-room," I said. "Look for a short man with sandy hair and wearing a white carnation. Speak to him without fear, and send him to me at this door. He should be here in five minutes. Fifteen minutes later, come to the door yourself and open it. You will find me on the steps outside. Can you be ready so soon?"

"In half the time," she replied.

"Brave girl! Now go! Don't be afraid; your father will not stop you."

In a few minutes, I heard the sound of hurried, uncertain footsteps approaching, and Brandon's friend appeared. I opened the side-door, and drew him out upon the steps, closing the door softly, after adjusting the latch, that I might open it again.

"Whew!" he breathed, softly, but with great relief; "a million wouldn't tempt me back inside that house."

"Carruthers," I said, "I don't know your name, but, for to-night, it's Carruthers. Our work is just beginning."

In a few words, I told him as much of my interview with Sammis as I thought best. "Run down to Madison avenue, and find Brandon's cab. Tell him to drive up to within fifty feet of the house, and to have his cab-door open. At the instant Miss Sammis is lifted in, he is to drive down Madison avenue like the wind—down Madison avenue, that is important—no matter where he is going. Now, do you understand?"

"Yes, but I have no hat."

"We'll both have to sacrifice our hats and coats for to-night, Carruthers, but it's in a great cause. 'Love before all,' you know." I laughed, and gave him a push toward the gate, as I said:

"Come back here instantly, and stand well below the door, in the shadow."

I crossed the street, found my own four-wheeler, and bade the driver bring the vehicle up to the house, opposite the side gate. I took all the bills in my pocket, and thrust them into his hand, as I gave him explicit instructions what he was to do. He promised faithful obedience.

"Mind," I concluded, "the instant you get the word, 'go,' you are to drive like mad up Fifth avenue. Don't stop within twenty blocks, no matter what you hear."

I ran back up the steps. My heart was beating rapidly, for the

crucial moment was approaching. I had Sammis and the maid yet to deal with. As I reached the top step, the door opened, and the maid appeared.

She started, at seeing me, but I put my finger on my lips. "I am sent by Mr. Sammis to stop this thing," I said, "though your mistress does not know it. Come, don't be afraid. I know all about the note."

The girl plainly mistrusted me, but went, unwillingly, toward the conservatory window, underneath which I bade her stand. The spot was a dark one, about a dozen yards from the side-door.

I noted, with satisfaction, that she wore a long, dark wrap with a hood. She carried in her hand a small bag.

And now for Sammis. What if, in the meantime, he had grown suspicious and had spoken to one of the real detectives? I should be exposed, and our scheme ruined.

One glance at his face, when I saw him, reassured me. The drawing-room was almost deserted, the guests being at supper. Sammis was watching for me, and came toward me, instantly.

"Mr. Sammis," I said, "things have come our way better than I dared to hope. I have got from that fool Carruthers the whole story of their plans. Both he and your daughter think I am a friend of Brandon's. Come into the conservatory; we can talk better there." I was drawing him toward it as I spoke.

"Brandon is here. He is waiting in a carriage down near the end of the line. Look out of the window, just opposite the gate, and you will see a cab which I have sent for. It is this vehicle I intend your daughter to enter. But, when she steps inside it, instead of Brandon, I wish her to find her father. Will not this be proof in its most convincing form that she is running away? In the meantime, I shall see that Mr. Brandon is detained, that you may deal with him as you see fit."

The dramatic element in this appealed to Sammis, for he whispered,

"Good, good," several times, and shook my hand, warmly.

"I shall remember you handsomely for this," he said in my ear.

"Your approval is sufficient," I answered. "But come, there is no time to lose. Your daughter may come here at any moment. Let us go through the window."

I jumped down on the grass, and Sammis followed, quickly; he was wonderfully spry for his years. The maid stood in the shadow where I had left her.

"Will you just speak a word to this young woman here, Mr. Sammis?" I whispered; "I fear she doesn't quite trust me."

When he saw the maid cloaked, with bag in hand, he seemed greatly surprised. I did not like the look which I felt, rather than saw, on his face as he turned toward me. For a moment, I feared I had gone too far.

"Everything has proceeded exactly according to the original programme," I said. "Your daughter expected her maid to attend her. I did not wish to arouse her suspicions."

"Certainly, certainly, you are right," he said. "Louise, in everything you are to do exactly as this gentleman bids you."

We crossed the grass-plot silently, hurried through the gate, and, in another minute, I had him safe inside my cab. I looked up toward Madison avenue, and saw Carruthers coming toward me. Things were timing themselves beautifully.

He slipped in the side gate, and joined me near the rear of the house. "All right," he whispered; "a four-wheeler with two black horses; the door stands open; Brandon knows what to do."

I signed him to stay where he was, and tiptoed up the steps to the side-door, which I opened. "I am here," came in a soft voice from within.

"Hand me out your wrap," I whispered.

She did so. It was a pearl-gray one, with a lace-trimmed hood. I crept along in the shadow of the

house, to where the maid stood motionless.

"Your mistress has brought the wrong wrap, and is afraid to come out," I whispered. "It is absolutely necessary that she does so. She wishes the one you have. Quick! take it off."

She obeyed at once. "You are a bright girl, and Mr. Sammis is greatly pleased with you," I said. "You'd better put this thing on—it's chilly here. It shall be yours after this business is ended." She fingered the soft, fleecy thing with evident delight, and draped it over her shoulders.

"Now, I am going to see that the young lady doesn't get away. When I send my partner, the other detective, for you, go with him to the carriage where Mr. Sammis is. In case there is any fainting, we may need you. Give me that bag—you don't wish to be bothered with it."

At last, the supreme moment had come. I crept back to Carruthers, and, with a last whispered word or two, pushed him toward the maid.

I saw him lead her out to the gate, drawing the hood of the wrap over her head as he walked beside her. The door of the cab opened. Carruthers picked the girl up and seemed to fling her inside.

"Go!" he shouted, slamming the door, and the horses dashed toward Fifth avenue.

I ran up the steps. "Now!" I cried, and, in an instant, Miss Sammis was beside me. I seized her hand, and we ran full speed up the dark side street, toward Madison avenue. I saw the black horses—the open cab door, and, in a moment, she was lifted into arms ready to receive her. I scrambled after her as the horses bounded forward, and, as we turned the corner on two wheels, I looked out and saw the figure of Carruthers, alone on the sidewalk, waving us a hilarious farewell.

She lay within the shelter of his arms, her eyes closed. She was a brave girl, but I could see by her pallor, as we dashed past the street lamps, how sorely her courage had

been tried. Brandon looked down at her lovely face, having eyes for nothing else. I put my head out of the window. No pursuing carriage was in sight.

"You are in no danger now," I said; "do you wish to drop me, or take me on to the station?"

Brandon started. "Who is that?" he asked, sharply. "It can't be—" He leaned forward and looked at me.

"Edgar, you said once you never wished to see me until you had forgotten. I have tried to be of some service to you to-night. Perhaps you can forgive, some day."

She opened her eyes. "He saved me for you, Edgar. My maid betrayed me—father was informed of everything, but he brought me safely through the danger. I do not know his name even, but he shall be my friend and yours, forever."

Brandon reached forward and pressed my hand in the darkness.

The story was told briefly, as we dashed through Twenty-third street toward the river. Not until we were on the other side, and out of New York state, did we all breathe freely.

There were still a few minutes before the train left. Edgar had brought out from somewhere a traveling cap, and made me put it on. The last thing he did, as we all sat together in the car, was to scribble something with a fountain-pen in a little book held on his knee. He tore out a cheque, and handed it to me.

"You can serve me while I am gone, Dick," he said. "A great rise is coming in Consolidated Steel. Buy all you can—and for Brandon & Felton. We are partners and friends again, my boy."

As I came back alone on the ferry, a gentle breeze was blowing up from the bay. The odor of the white carnation was wafted pleasantly to my nostrils. I looked toward the dark city across the water, and, again, thought of Alice Lazarre. Tomorrow, I would go to see her—tomorrow. A distant bell boomed out midnight, and, suddenly, I remembered that it was the hour at which I was to die. I had quite forgotten it. Then I laughed, softly. How much better it was to live!



THE JEWELS

HERE is a ruby, my heart that has bled for you;
Here are white pearls, the prayers I have said for you;
Lo! here are diamonds, tears I have shed for you.

Yea, here are opals, the thoughts I have thought for you;
Here are dear moonstones, the dreams I have wrought for you,
Set in the gold of my love that is naught to you!

LUCILE WATSON.



NO WAGGISH WAYS

THE SPANIEL—Horses are so peculiar!

THE HOUND—They certainly are. Why, I have never seen one that would wag his tail when he was happy.

Jan., 1903

A WINTER'S TALE

WHEN thick and fast the snow flies,
 And Winter's dream comes true,
 Straight as the hungry crow flies,
 My fancy goes to you,
 Across the miles to greet you,
 Love's one unchanging star,
 And say again how sweet you
 Are.

The wings of hope are tireless,
 The heart of love is gay;
 Our messages were wireless
 Before Marconi's day.
 And fancy has no fear you
 Have made the flight too far;
 He still can tell how dear you
 Are.

The white flakes have no terror
 For Love, whose compass shows
 The way, without an error,
 To you, my Winter Rose;
 So, when he comes to bless you,
 And call you mine, don't mar
 My dream, but just confess you
 Are.

FELIX CARMEN.



COMPULSORY MIRTH

"YOU laughed like three men at his silly jokes, merely because you owe him ten dollars!"
 "Yes, and, if it had been twenty, I'd have laughed like sixty."



A DEDUCTION

HER MOTHER—But what makes you doubt George's love? I'm sure he's devotion itself.

THE BRIDE—W-we've been m-married six months, a-and he hasn't told me a s-s-single lie yet!

ALMA ADORATA

By Edgar Saltus

“*L*ES voyageurs pour Paris en voitu...rr...re!”

The call rang musically through the night. I had forgotten that the train had stopped. Epictetus was with me. I am familiar enough with him, but he always seems to have something new to say. In that he differs from other of my friends. On a train, he is particularly serviceable. He stimulates your imagination, and that spares your eyes. But, at the call, I looked up, and then at the door of a compartment which I was occupying on the Sud-Express, and in which, thus far on the trip, I had, to my satisfaction, been alone.

Now, a man was entering, assisted by two servants. They got him seated directly opposite me, and then, from the corridor, fetched a lot of rugs and bags which they distributed about. Presently, they vanished. I looked at the man. He was a sallow creature, with great, burning, black eyes, and dressed with that absence of smartness that is sometimes the result of philosophy, but more often of indifference, the which, after all, is a form of philosophy, itself. As I was inventorying him, I saw that he was inventorying me. As our eyes met, he smiled. Meanwhile, the train had started.

“You do not remember me,” he said, in English. “Yet, of course, I have changed a lot, and you haven’t a bit. I am George Capel.”

“Certainly, I remember you,” I replied; and so I did when he told me who he was. We had been at school together at St. Paul’s. That is fully

a generation ago. Since then, I had lost sight of him. But, as memory raised a latch, and he emerged from behind it, a scatter of reminiscences trooped after him.

I recalled that his people were disgustingly rich, and that, after Harvard, he had been billeted as attaché to our minister—we had ministers then—at St. James’s. In that effulgence he departed. I saw him going in to dinner directly after royals, and discussing with them the disadvantages of not being born. What is worse, I saw him purchasing as many trousers as he liked without fear of interference at our docks. I saw the magnificence of this splendor, and nothing more, for, almost immediately, a change in the White House had been followed by a change in our representatives abroad, and, of Capel, I heard nothing further. And now, there he sat before me. Such are the surprises of life and of *trains-de-luxe*.

“No,” he continued, “you have not turned a hair. But, then, what a delightful existence you lead! *C’est beau la vie littéraire*. Whereas I——”

He paused, looked out of the window, then back at me, and asked, abruptly, “You know what happened, do you not?”

“After your recall from London?”

He nodded.

I shook my head. It was quite one to me. But Epictetus admonishes us to be considerate. I saw that he wished to talk, to abuse somebody or something, to use me, perhaps, as a sewer, and I proceeded to let him.

Presently, from the odds and ends of his speech, an idea glimmered. By way of overture, he was executing a fantasy on St. Paul's.

"You remember Manners, do you not? He was in the sixth form when we were in the fifth."

"Yes," I answered, "I do remember Manners, and I remember, too, that he had precious few of them."

"Candidly, he was a brute. That, though, is a detail. After leaving London, I met his sister. How did you feel when you first read Victor Hugo?"

"Sunstruck."

"Precisely. That is the way I felt when I first saw her. In London, I had seen beauty by the acre. But not beauty such as hers. The charm of it was so heady that I reeled. I cried, '*Gloria!*' and my heart answered, '*In Excelsis!*'"

He stopped again, and again looked out into the night. I ventured to prod him.

"Well?"

"Well," he answered, at last, but remotely, as though returning from some inordinate distance; "well, I had cut Manners long before. There was one difficulty, for their parents were dead, and she lived with him. How I bridged that is immaterial. But I did bridge it. Then, I encountered another difficulty. She was engaged. Meanwhile, she treated me as though I were part of the landscape. There was about as much chance of my getting her as of becoming Emperor of the French. Do you mind if I smoke?"

"Not in the least."

"*Eh bien! alors voilà la situation,*" Capel continued, when he had found and lighted a cigar. "But there are miracles. By the way, do you believe in ghosts?"

"Everything is possible," I replied. Yet, as I handed out that platitude, I minded me of a lady who, being asked the same question, had answered, "No, but I am dreadfully afraid of them." I am quite as much afraid of bores. I did not say

so to Capel, however. Frequentation with Epictetus makes one very civil.

"Yes," Capel retorted, "yes, everything is possible. You are right—perhaps even more so than you fancy; perhaps more than any one could fancy. For, ultimately, through circumstances which would take me too long to disentangle, there occurred nothing less than a procession of miracles. In the first place, she consented to permit me to vacate the landscape of which I had been a part. There was miracle number one. Then she broke her engagement. There was the second miracle. Finally, she put her hand in mine."

At this climax, Capel, in a crescendo of triumph, stared at me through his great, black, burning eyes.

"Ah," he ran on at once, "ah, the sheer intoxication of the bewilderment of it! The past became a mirror, mirroring nothing save the dream of the coming of her. The future grew wholly solid, brutally beautiful, dreamless and real. While, as for the present, there, fairer than the desire of a fallen god, she stood, her hand in mine."

In the excitement of the retrospect, Capel, with magnificent unconcern, flipped the ashes from his cigar partly over himself, partly over me. But, at once, noticing his carelessness, he apologized and asked would I do him the favor to call him man.

I looked out in the corridor. The servants were seated there with the porter. I beckoned to one of them.

"*A boire, Ferdinand,*" said Capel, when the man appeared.

"*Monsieur désire-t-il à manger aussi? Il y a des cailles en aspic.*"

"Will you eat anything?" Capel asked of me, and, on my thanking him, ordered some mandarin liqueur, which Ferdinand presently produced in a flask of gold, and, arranging the little table, with which these compartments are supplied, set it there between us, and with it two little cups, also of gold, which from the workmanship I judged were Deccan.

At Capel's invitation, I took a taste

of the liqueur. For a wonder, it was not the imitation. Capel tossed off, one after the other, two of the little cups, and began with his tale anew.

Yet something, the story, perhaps the country through which we were passing, or both, evoked an episode that had aromatized my youth, and, losing myself in it, I ceased to listen.

When, at last, I caught up with him again, I found he had been telling me of the wedding. From what I gathered, it had occurred out of town—at Lenox, perhaps—and, immediately after, he and his bride had driven to the station. On the way, they were run into. Whether by an auto or a trolley I did not hear. In any event, there was a crash. It was the crash that aroused me.

"When I recovered consciousness," Capel was saying, "they were carrying Alma away. She was dead."

"What!"

"Dead," he repeated; and, as he uttered that monosyllable, in which all of life is resumed, he looked down, and in those great, burning, black eyes of his I divined that there were tears.

For a while he sat, his head still bowed. The porter entered, offering to make the beds. I waved him away. But, at the interruption, Capel looked up at me again.

"You will, perhaps, understand what it meant. At the moment she was mine I had lost her. For a shock such as that there is nothing earthly that can palliate or console. My whole life had gone down with hers."

"I do understand," I answered. "Many another would have followed her."

"And do you know why I did not? But how could you know! That which kept me from killing myself was the fact that I did not believe it."

"Believe what?"

"Why, that I had lost her! After efforts on my part, of which the recital is needless, but of which many were hopeless and all inconceivable, there, just when I had got her, suddenly, in an instant, without warning or premonition of any kind, from the

carriage in which we sat, from my side, from my arms, she was tossed into death. It was too abrupt. I could not believe it. I told myself that it was not true, that it was a nightmare from which I should awake."

"Yes, yes," I threw in, "I can understand that also."

"When I was able, I got to town, to the house which we were to have occupied. There I immured myself. The servants were told never to approach me. Such orders as I had to give I put in writing and threw out in the halls. Months passed, during which I neither saw nor spoke to any one. The nightmare was about me still. I was waiting to awake. Everything is possible, you said. Awake, at last, I did."

"Yes, yes," I repeated, "I can understand that, too. For sorrow there is but one cure—time and silence. And," I added to myself, "some one to beguile them both."

But the little *à part* might have been uttered aloud. Capel was too feverishly intent to heed. He was looking now less at me than through me, on some vista visible only to himself.

"I awoke," he continued, "to find that it was not true. You must have read De Vigny," he interrupted himself to remark, "and you will probably recall a passage in which he speaks of a vault opening in the far blue sky and showing a shaft that ran up through millennia, through æons, and up that shaft he mounted, mounted, mounted ever further yet."

I did not remember the passage, but my interest, that had waned, increased, and I nodded as though I had.

"One night, I, too, mounted that shaft. How? Clairvoyantly, like De Vigny, I suppose. But I cannot be sure. I only know that mount it I did, and that there, very near the summit, among cascades of light, cavalcades of beauty, cataracts of harmony and convulsions of splendor, Alma stood, her arms outstretched. As I reached her, she leaned forward,

and down the shaft of azure we sank together, down through lambencies of amber and emerald, deeper and ever deeper yet, through resplendent perspectives, through pulsations of life unto life, deeper, deeper still, through ascensions of immaculate joy, through tempests of forms and farewells, deeper, still deeper, through diminishing consonances, through the undulations of tumults, the trepidations of passion, through swooning splendors, through interrupted delights, deeper, deeper still, through measureless abysses, through millennia, through æons, through kalpas of time and of space, deeper, always deeper, further and further yet, until peace slept upon us as dawn upon the sea."

"*Il devient lyrique*," I mused.

"On the morrow, when I opened my eyes, it was to the accompaniment of music. I was in my room in town, and at the other end of it, at a piano, Alma sat. She was playing an air that I had never heard. It was the melody of it that had aroused me. I went toward her. As I did so, I could see that she was fairer than ever, etherealized, aerial, quasi-transparent, wholly divine. As I approached, she turned. The rhyme of her lips parted ineffably, and she smiled. I took her hand, or, rather, tried to take her hand, but my fingers closed on nothingness. At this, she smiled again. In words not articulated, which, however, through some process similar to that of clair-audience, seemed to vibrate within me, 'You forget, do you not,' I heard her say, 'that I am but a spirit now? Yet kiss me. It shall be the seal of our marriage eternal.' At that, she rose to me, and on my lips I felt the volatile caress of a perfume."

Capel had been looking at me, intently. But now his expression changed to one of inquiry. "There is nothing improbable to you in this, is there?" he asked.

I was about to answer that there was, but Epictetus, whom I still held in my hand, restrained me.

"No," I answered, "I see in it nothing improbable. A crustacean

extracts from the watery substances wherewith to make a shell. From food a bird produces feathers. Similarly, an animal creates bone. These processes are marvelous, yet so common that we give them no heed. But, in view of them, it is quite conceivable that a spirit may so utilize particles and elements of air that materialization ensues. What you tell me is not, therefore, improbable, and as Alma—I beg your pardon—as Mrs. Capel was your wife, there is nothing improper in it, either.

"On the contrary," I added, after a moment, "quite the reverse. But tell me, have you suffered from cataract?"

Capel stared at me, blankly.

"At Heidelberg," I continued, "I remember that my shoemaker became annoyed by the apparitions of deceased, and possibly defaulting, customers. One day, when I was trying on a pair of those magnificent boots that harmonize so beautifully with student caps, he was good enough to take me into his confidence. Had he been an Italian, I should have counseled exorcism; as he was a Teuton, I recommended an ophthalmic surgeon. The surgeon, I subsequently learned, came, examined and operated. In no time, those ghosts were laid."

The stare from Capel's face had gone. He was looking at me now with diligent disdain.

"But your experience," I resumed, "is, of course, entirely different. It accords very perfectly with many another set forth at length by the Society for Psychical Research. Moreover, it is directly in line with experiments conducted by Sir William Crookes. *Ce monsieur n'est pas le premier venu*. He is a scientist. As such, he was, a few years ago, honored by the visit of a young and very pretty spirit, named Katie King. She sat in his lap, decorated his buttonhole with a rose, and told him all manner of delightful things. Said Sir William, in a subsequent monograph concerning her, 'I do not

say that such things may be; I say that such things are.' Personally, had I been similarly honored, I should have refrained from publishing anything calculated to reflect on Miss King's conceptions of the *convenances*. But, then, I am not a scientist. Then, too, it may be that Miss King gave him permission. There are women who like publicity. It may be that there are spirits with similar tastes.

"But apropos," I added, "permit me to ask you a question. We have agreed, have we not, that everything is possible? Let us also agree that everything is explicable. There is no such thing as mystery. There is only ignorance. Now, what I would like to ask is this: may it not be that some of your friends, alarmed by your clauststration, and seeking, perhaps, to divert you, succeeded in introducing into your house some—some fairy, let us say, who was fortunate enough to possess a resemblance to your wife?"

From Capel's face, the high disdain had gone. In its place had come that rapt look which mediums share with the insane. Whether or not he had heard my query, I could not tell.

"When Alma kissed me," he resumed, "the music continued, the melody, too, of her inaudible words. It was all quite real—as real, that is, as the intangible can be. There she was; I was kneeling to her, gazing up in her eyes, watching the changing rhymes of her mouth, dazzled by her beauty, transported by her presence, idolizing her with an idolatry no mortal heart has known before, yet unable to touch her, unable to get more than the savor of her perfume on my lips. Real, did I say it was? It was insensate."

"No," I objected, "not that. You had all the raptures of love, with none of the disillusion of life—*l'ivresse du baiser sans le contact des lèvres*. And that, believe me, is the ideal. But, if I may ask without indiscretion, did the materialization prolong, or was it renewed?"

"Every day she came to me, some-

times every hour. With colored vapor she reproduced herself, reproduced the gown, the lace, the pearls, the flowers which at high noon she had worn that day in church. Were it not that instead of the silk of her mouth my lips met nothingness—at most but the subtlety of an impalpable perfume—the illusion of her presence would have been complete. At a little distance, her translucence was barely apparent. Though but a vision, she was a distinct delight—to my eyes, at least; to my heart as well. But, otherwise, the fable of Tantalus was accentuated, augmented and multiplied a thousandfold. To behold her near me was beatific, but to be unable to hold her to me was torture sublimated and distilled. It was torture so *lancinante* that one night I sprang at a pistol, thinking that in death, thinking were my flesh thrown aside like a garment, I could mingle my spirit with hers. Instantly, she was at my side, compelling me to desist, warning me that I was separating myself from her, not forever—no, not that—but until I returned in the Ship of the Million Million of Years."

"What is that?" I asked. "I have never heard of it."

"Nor had I. Nor did she explain. She was not permitted to, she told me later. But the threat of it sufficed."

"*Et puis?*"

Capel waved his hands. "That has been my life since then. She is always with me, when I am alone, that is, and, save an occasional journey taken, as this is, at her wish, alone I always am."

The train was stopping. Through the door of the compartment the porter peered.

"*Bayonne! Dix minutes d'arrêt.*"

Capel started. Yet, that was natural. From the uplands of the occult to a southern prefecture, the distance is appreciable. He had been far away; I, too, and to change the air I got up and went out to the station beyond.

There it occurred to me to enter the buffet and order a *mazagan*. As I passed into the restaurant, a cry follow-

ed me, succeeded immediately by the noise of hurrying feet. Turning, I saw a gathering crowd of guards, officials, passengers. I got among them. Capel appeared to have fallen. His servants were lifting him back into the car.

"It is a syncope," said Ferdinand, in French, when we had him stretched out in the compartment, "one of the attacks to which he is subject. Jules," he added, to his comrade, "telegraph to madame to meet us."

"Jules had better stay here," I said. "I will attend to the message. To whom is it to go?"

"To his wife, monsieur; to Madame Capel, 11 bis, avenue Kléber. Monsieur is very kind."

"To his wife!" I exclaimed. I felt as though I were having a syncope myself. "I thought—I thought—" Truly, I did not quite know what I did think. "He is recently married, then, is he not?" I managed to ask.

"But no, monsieur. Monsieur and Madame Capel have a son who is going on his eighteenth year."

Thereat, at once, in reply to my heightening and manifest bewilderment, Ferdinand answered me in a manner eminently discreet:

"My master has perhaps been diva-

gating to monsieur. A year ago, he was injured in the explosion of a launch. He hurt his spine, and"—as the man spoke he touched his forehead—"it upset him here." Apart from that, he is good as bread. *Et d'une douceur! C'est un enfant.*

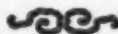
"Ah! voilà. J'y suis."

I looked down at Alma's adorer. He seemed to be recovering—to be returning rather to that world invisible and fantastic in which poets and madmen dwell.

Such are the stupidities and vulgarities with which the rest of us are surrounded that I envied him the unreal that was real to him. "Cheat yourself and dream," said Epictetus. Capel had known how better than I who have frequented that sage. He had known how better, perhaps, than Epictetus himself. There was indeed reason to envy him, a thousand reasons to envy his immaculate and imaginary amours.

And, reflecting that of all traveling companions—Epictetus included—lunatics are the most stimulating, I went back to the station, despatched the message, and got aboard again, as the guard called through the night:

"Les voyageurs pour Paris en voitu...rr...rel!"



THE MAGIC CALL

THINK you the day of miracles has fled?

I stood beside a human heart—a tomb—

Cold, silent, sunless, filled with ghosts and gloom,
And saw a resurrection of the dead.

One stood before the tomb, with lifted head

And eyes of strange, sweet fire. He called, and lo!

Forms came forth that were buried long ago,

At sound of the three magic words he said.

Youth, smiling-eyed, tearing the grave-clothes through;

Hope, breaking all the bandages of death;

And laughter, flinging off her wreath of rue;

Joy, drawing in a long, delicious breath—

Ah, these I saw burst into perfect bloom

When the low call, "I love you!" pierced the tomb!

VENITA SEIBERT.

SOCIAL LIFE IN WASHINGTON

By Waldon Fawcett

THE fabric of social life at the national capital is manifestly of a weave more complex than in any other American city; and its intricacies appear to increase rather than diminish. This accelerated development of a social centre, at once unique and separate and distinct from every other fashionable community, not even excepting the metropolis, may be attributed mainly to two influences of new-found potency. On the one hand, growing out of the accession of the United States to the position of a world power, is an enlarged official circle, with consequent formal functions more numerous and more pretentious; while, on the other hand, the phenomenal prosperity of the past few years has turned the eyes of an increasing number of wealthy folk upon the "city of leisure" on the Potomac, and, the means being ready to hand, its salubrity and social advantages have induced many of them to become temporary or permanent residents.

A few years since, the more exclusive portion of Washington society was divided, broadly speaking, into two general classes. The one comprised the families of the governmental officials, and then, as now, revolved around the White House. The other, constituting what was known as the "residential set," was composed, to a considerable extent, of those old Maryland and Virginia families who have made their homes in Washington for generations. These two foundation stones remain in the new social temple—the first-mentioned class recruited by the growth of the government, and the clique of veteran residents becom-

ing more restricted as, in their exclusiveness, they draw the lines of reserve closer about them. But Washington society is no longer the simple structure that it was, for, socially, officialdom has been subdivided, and in the non-official sphere new factors have appeared, not the least important of which has been the advent of numbers of men and women of refinement and leisure, with means to indulge their tastes and caprices.

Still another phase of the social evolution of the capital city is reflected in the present-day residential conditions. Time was when the public official whose duties called him to Washington very rarely either purchased or erected a residence, and the few mansions which have, for half a century, been centres of entertaining were ample for the requirements of the comparatively few fashionable folk who desired to extend lavish hospitality, during a temporary sojourn in the City of Magnificent Distances. Now, however, the number of large houses, obtainable by lease annually, proves inadequate to satisfy the demands of the prospective participants in the gaieties of the Washington "season," and each year finds notable additions to the number of palatial habitations, which have been erected, several of them at a cost of half a million dollars each, by devotees of the social world. Likewise, the public official, whose tenure of office bids fair to be at all protracted, appears prone to establish his household in a permanent home, and many of the powerful members of Congress, such as Senators Quay, Hoar, Foraker, Hale, Lodge and Elkins, have, at the

seat of government, abodes which are much more truly their homes than any structures in the states from which they are elected.

It is a strange coincidence that, whereas the increasing fondness of the well-to-do American families for country-life has resulted in a material curtailment of the social season in New York and other large cities, the corresponding period of activity in Washington has been proportionately lengthened. Longer sessions of Congress are required to transact the public business, and the new responsibilities of the government render it impossible for members of the cabinet and other prominent officials to desert the capital, almost in a body, for a long interval, during the Summer, as was formerly the custom. The diplomats and many of the moving spirits in official and residential circles are absent, to be sure, for long periods during the heated term, but the enforced presence of some official households causes the social campaign to open earlier in the Autumn and wane later in the Spring than was once its wont, and, incidentally, has resulted in the tardy development of that suburban life for which Washington affords such exceptional opportunities.

The most superficial observer must be impressed with the kaleidoscopic feature of Washington society—a characteristic present in a more marked degree than in any other city. The secret of it is found, of course, in the conditions which prevail in officialdom. The official "set" is omnipresent, yet its membership is ever-changing. Each succeeding Winter brings many changes in the personnel of the diplomatic corps; every other year sees the appearance of new members of Congress; and, from the very nature of things, changes in the cabinet and in the minor positions in the executive departments are frequent. So, too, the army and navy officers—to a majority of whom Washington is "home"—are ever being ordered hither and thither; but there is a difference in that these military and naval men are likely to

return sooner or later to renew old acquaintances, whereas the individual whose future is dependent upon the whims of the public or the President may, at any time, be banished from the capital.

Only a minority of the two thousand households, entitled to places within the sacred precincts of the official social circle, do any entertaining worthy of the name, and yet these dispensers of hospitality are divided into several different "sets" of pronounced individuality of character. The principal divisions of this social world comprise the cabinet circle, the supreme court coterie, the diplomatic corps, the congressional contingent and the army and navy set. Representatives of all these bodies frequently meet, as upon common ground, at great functions—such as the White House receptions—and distinguished members of the different official communities, such as the general commanding the army, the admiral of the navy, an influential senator, or a popular diplomat—make frequent dinner excursions beyond their own immediate domains.

The much-mooted question of precedence forever has been, and doubtless forever will be, the bane of official society in Washington, and, indeed, it extends its tentacles to every function at which one or more men of official rank are guests. Because of the dissensions and discussions which it has created at the republican court at Washington, life-friendships have been broken and life enmities engendered; indeed, on more than one occasion, infractions of this rigidly prescribed etiquette have threatened to result in international complications. The reading public will yet recall the lively controversy as to whether or not Mrs. Dewey, wife of the admiral of the navy, should be given precedence to Mrs. Miles, the wife of the general commanding the army, and a similarly aggressive contest is yet in progress between the speaker of the House of Representatives and the speaker, *pro tempore*, of the Senate. In social usage, the diplomats, like the senators,

take rank according to seniority of service at Washington, but a hostess must also remember that all the ambassadors rank the ministers, and bear in mind the relative prerogatives of *chargés d'affaires*, secretaries and attachés.

What is known as residential society at Washington has almost as many ramifications as has officialdom, although they are less conspicuous. If lineage and exclusiveness constitute the main sources of social preëminence, primary consideration must be accorded to the old resident set, which guards its portals with a jealousy which has no parallel, save in the Creole society of New Orleans. The originators of this conservative old guard were the early settlers of the District of Columbia, together with the most cultured of the landed proprietors of Maryland, Virginia and the more southern states, and, since the Civil War, their descendants have increased, rather than relaxed, their exclusiveness.

As is the case with the aristocracy of the south elsewhere, wealth has no value as a passport to the sacred social precincts. There is considerable wealth among the old resident set, and a few of its members are possessed of great fortunes, but there are also in this select assemblage not a few persons whose sole resources are the rather meager salaries attached to minor positions in the government departments.

Failing in the effort to break down the barriers with which the old guard of Washington society is hedged about, the bizarre element, which has made its appearance in social Washington with the influx of *nouveaux riches*, has of late years formed a circle of its own, chiefly distinguished by lavish display in houses and entertainments. The moneyed parvenus did not seek thus to solace themselves, however, until they had exhausted their energies in desperate and often ludicrous attempts to penetrate the inner citadel of Washington society.

The all but garish display and

ofttimes undiplomatic tactics of the newcomers have well-nigh driven from the social stage what might be termed the pioneers of the non-resident contingent.

It would be too much to expect that the revolutionary influences of the past few years—the invasion by the pleasure-loving, extravagant portion of the smart set, and the extension of governmental activities—would not have their effect upon the *grandes dames* who are the arbiters of affairs in the residential set. The effect has not been the same in all cases, however. Some of the old families have withdrawn more resolutely than ever within the circle of their old and tried friends, while others, impelled by a spirit of progress, have permitted an almost total dissolution of the old lines of demarcation, and now maintain the most cordial relations with a chosen portion of the new residents and with congenial families in the "floating population," as those in official life are denominated.

Leaving the old resident set out of consideration, and viewing the whole broad social field at the capital, it must be admitted that entry into society in Washington is a boon much more easily won than in many other cities. Indeed, there are women who, to a certain extent, rank as social leaders at the seat of government, who have never been enabled to enter the charmed precincts at home. Almost any person of ordinary tact and judgment, who is in a position to maintain a large house and entertain lavishly, may pass beyond the magic social portals, provided he does not happen to be "in trade," locally. It is a trifle inconsistent, this acceptance of the pork-packer from Chicago and the rejection of the furniture-dealer at home, but it is inexorable, nevertheless.

The woeful absence of the eternal masculine in Washington has an important bearing upon the leniency of social arbiters. The national capital comes dismally near being an Adamless Eden, as far as single men are concerned. Owing to the dearth

of commercial and industrial possibilities, practically all the ambitious young men migrate as soon as they are old enough to come to a realization of the situation, whereas most of the men who come to the dream city on the Potomac, as members of Congress or to assume governmental positions, are married, and not a few of them leave sons at home, and bring daughters—allured by the prospect of a social career—to swell the hopeless surplus of young, unmarried women.

How dire a disaster this dearth of eligible bachelors is considered by Washington hostesses, was forcefully illustrated a few years since, during the war which waged between some matrons of high social position, on the one hand, and, on the other, a *nouveau riche* from the West, who was endeavoring to effect a breach in the social fortifications. The newcomer had the temerity to plan a series of dances for the evenings that had been selected for a series of similar functions by her associated rivals. The Washington women had little difficulty in securing promises of allegiance from all the popular bachelors in the city, but the invader recruited her dancing corps of men from New York, thus securing the attendance of not a few of the Washington girls; and, to make her victory the more complete, she finally lured, by the sheer magnificence of her entertainments, a number of the bachelors who had originally sworn fealty to her opponents.

Because of this condition of affairs, it must be admitted that the Washington girls have rather a dull time—not dull, perhaps, in comparison with the enjoyments of girls in many other cities, but dull compared to what social existence should be in view of the advantages supposedly offered by a national capital. To make matters worse, there are comparatively few functions especially organized for what is popularly designated as the "younger set." Conditions in this respect have improved since Miss Alice Roosevelt became a daugh-

ter of the White House, but, prior to last season, dances formed but an occasional oasis in a weary waste of dinners and receptions.

The dinner, by the way, is pre-eminently the approved method of entertaining in Washington. Possibly, this is to be attributed to the opportunities which the formal repast affords for repartee and for the insidious "lobbying," which, in Washington, becomes second nature to a charming woman who is a clever conversationalist. But, moreover, the popularity of this form of entertainment may be due to the fact that a dinner is the one affair on the social calendar for which a hostess can confidently count on a full quota of invited masculine guests; for, be it sorrowfully confessed, the older society men are almost as scarce as their juniors, when it comes to attendance at any evening affair save a dinner, and it is by no means exceptional at a White House reception to see a lone man acting as cavalier to several women.

The universal prevalence of the dinner-giving habit has resulted in the development in Washington of a most extensive class of professional diners-out. The experienced society devotee of this class, who has become an adept in the gentle art of being so agreeable that he is regarded as well-nigh indispensable, easily constitutes one of the most interesting figures in the assemblage of "types" on the cosmopolitan social stage at the American capital. In the accepted list of professional diners-out, there is a considerable sprinkling of the younger and unmarried members of the diplomatic corps. Many of the senators and representatives who do not keep house are, likewise, willing recipients of dinner invitations. Among these congressional courtiers are some bachelors, but a greater proportion are gallants, who, if they have wives at home, do not mention the fact any oftener than is necessary. As an indication of the achievements of these social "free-lances," it may be

noted that it is the boast of a veteran member of Congress that not once did he pay for his dinner during the score of years covering his career in Washington.

The lively competition between dinner hostesses is responsible for the establishment of another custom peculiar to Washington—the extension of invitations to prominent persons with whom neither host nor hostess has the slightest acquaintance; and, strange to relate, many persons of note manifest no hesitancy in accepting the hospitality of entertainers of whom they never heard, prior to the receipt of cards of invitation.

Of late years, there have arisen in Washington a number of cliques—offensive and defensive alliances of

varying power. The influence of the mistress of the White House is essentially a potent factor in the formation of these small, select circles, unless the First Lady of the Land exercise exceptional care not to allow her personal preferences to dictate her official policies.

Washington has always had a number of minor feuds in official social life, and it is necessary to regard such enmities with rather more solicitude when they are engendered at the seat of government than if they occur elsewhere, for the reason that, in Washington, a social feud is almost invariably reflected on the political horizon, with results often more or less disastrous to the husbands of the warring social leaders.



A PORTRAIT

SHE is altogether woman, yet not altogether human,
For the devil has his share in her—a goodly share, at that!
And he lurks in every dimple—Satan's snare for wise and simple—
And he hides in every angle of her dainty picture-hat.

She's demure, and yet she's witty, and she's prettier than pretty;
She's bewitching—more's the pity!—for on seeing her our souls
Prostrate fall at once before her, just as if each mad adorer
Were a helpless human tenpin, and her eyes were playing bowls!

She has faults and follies, many; virtues very few, if any;
She will sigh when you are merry, she will smile when you make moan.
She could love a poor man—never! Oh, in fact, she's far too clever
To love any one forever, save her pretty self alone!

She will gladly spend an hour in a higher bid for power,
In arranging bow or flower of the cap she sets for you;
But a moment's time for duty is too much to ask of Beauty:
Leave such things to plainer women that have nothing else to do!

Oh, I sketch her thus that others, unsuspecting men and brothers,
All may profit by the portrait, so that he who reads may run—
Run so swiftly from the sitter, to avert a fate so bitter,
That perchance she'll deem it fitter to make me the Only One!

J. A. REED.



WHEN the dime museum burns, the fat woman will undoubtedly be the heaviest loser.

NATURE STUDY

A SON of Ananias wrote
A nature-study book;
He was a liar of some note,
A literary crook,
Who photographed the mountain goat
And fished without a hook.

He told his gunless story well,
It caught me like a charm;
In nature study I'd excel—
No living thing I'd harm.
I hurried off to wood and dell,
His book beneath my arm.

The fond and fair mosquito came,
Desiring to be fed;
The merry hornet played a game
Of tag about my head;
The centipede was quick to claim
A shelter in my bed.

The cordial ants, upon whose hill
I slumbered, welcomed me;
The poison-ivy by the rill
I analyzed with glee;
And though the mushroom made me ill,
'Twas beautiful to see.

A list of birdies I compiled,
While they devoured my fruit;
And on my chicks the weasel smiled—
He knew I scorned to shoot;
The moose that tossed me seemed a mild
And well-intentioned brute.

Remember, little children, then,
'Tis wrong to tease the bat;
Embrace the adder in his den,
And feed the pleasant rat;
Vex not the birds with scarecrow men;
Be gentle to the gnat.

Oh, rub the friendly wildcat's nose;
Be civil to the bass;
And study Nature, as she grows,
With sister's opera-glass;
Then write your book, and you can pose
As brother to the ass!

FRANK ROE BATCHELDER.

THE EXILED STAR

By Maurice Francis Egan

THE room was long and narrow, with a floor polished to the smoothness of smooth ice for over two hundred years by the careful hands of the lay sisters of the Convent of the Falaise. The walls were white, relieved only at the four windows by bright red and blue curtains, and a great mass of crimson and yellow roses over the chimneypiece at the end of the room. It was divided in half by a screen, covered with lace-bordered pictures of the saints, with a large double-page "cut" of the Sistine Madonna, in the middle panel, taken by the good nuns, from that worldly paper, *L'Illustration*.

The convent overlooked the little Norman town of Mers and the Château d'Eu, and the room was full of memories of that fashionable but heroic lady of her time, the Princesse de Lamballe. There were stiff-backed chairs, with the arms of the Orléans family embroidered on their backs, a couch, more luxurious than anything else in the room, covered with Persian drapery; and, on this, Mademoiselle Olga Clarke reclined, with the château visible to her eyes, and the beat of the sea in her ears. She was surrounded by letters, packages and a few milliners' boxes; a Parisian newspaper was in her hand, a new photograph on the floor near her, and she was laughing.

Marie, her shadow, well-groomed, serene, self-satisfied, in a white Norman cap and a black gown, with aggressively large cuffs, stood at the door of the little anteroom, holding a tray on which was placed—exactly in the middle—a carafe of *eau sucrée*.

Olga Clarke was tall, graceful, with

the complexion of a brunette, and the hair of a golden blonde. Her eyes were hazel, but so over-curtained by dark lashes that their color was seldom noticed. They gave light and wonderful expression to her face—that was all you knew. Her morning gown was plastic and picturesque, the sort of thing that was to be expected from an actress who could make reputations for the Rue de la Paix, and whose dress in the last act of "La Femme de Serge" had set the fashion even among the advanced ladies of Japan.

"Ah, Marie," Miss Clarke said, in the softest of voices, "set down that carafe, and take a chair—do be quiet for a moment. Emulate the good nuns. They are never disquieted—but, then, Marie, they are always doing something. You should have been an American!"

"Madame jests," said Marie, in the Norman accent. "I do but what I must. It is not proper that I should sit in your presence."

"Oh, Marie, what a hypocrite you are! A thousand times have I heard you say the same thing, but you always sat down. There!—that is right! You should not call me madame; I am only mademoiselle, though I may be madame soon," and she pointed to the photograph on the floor.

"The Duke de Fabré?"

"No," answered Miss Clarke, "a much better man. I have just been talking to Mother Séraphine about him."

"Nuns know nothing of the world."

"Old maids do!" said Olga Clarke, with an indulgent laugh.

"When they have been on the stage for five years, they know much."

Olga laughed in a ripple of crystal sound, that made Mother Séraphine, in the room above, smile, sympathetically.

"Five years! And is it so long since Mother Séraphine put you in my care?"

"Put you in *my* care, mademoiselle," said Marie, gravely. "Oh, how sad I was, after the death of my good parents—with no friends. And Mother Séraphine said, 'I know a little actress who must have a serious little maid.' And, since that, we have always been together."

"And you have been very good!"

"But why should I not call mademoiselle, 'madame'? It is more distinguished. And mademoiselle is a great actress. If you will read the journal I brought you a moment ago, you will find much about that. It is the American journal. I saw your name in great letters."

"You shall call me 'madame,' when I am married."

"The other great actresses are not all married," answered Marie, in an aggrieved voice. "There is Madame —"

"Oh, I know whom you mean! She has been married almost as often as a certain Madame de Bath, mentioned by the English poet, Chaucer. Ah, here is the notice," Olga said, opening the *Herald*. "I certainly am a great person!"

"You are!" said Marie, approvingly.

"A flash as of a crimson blast from a silver trumpet—a tone *gules*, as it were, on a field *argent*—this was the voice of Olga Clarke as she stood before the *Tsar Alexander*, in the third act of "*La Femme de Serge*," fighting for the soul of her lover," Olga read in English, while Marie sat, with her hands folded, not understanding, but, nevertheless, enraptured. "Her gown of yellow silk, spotted with brown, clung to her as the skin of a panther clings to the lithe creature of the forest; it was part

of her; it fell about her, feet in amber radiance, and writhed, snake-like, around the undulating length of her *svelte* figure. At the psychological moment, she sprang clear across the divan that separated her from the *Tsar*, and her jeweled dagger flashed. Then came the dirge of sublimated dialogue. The air seemed to flame, to quiver; and through it all, the panther-like figure moved, retreated, and, on the entrance of the brutal *Sergius*, sprang back again over the carved divan, making of it a double defense. Such fire—such passion—such a union of all arts in the climax of the third act of "*La Femme de Serge*—" amazed Paris. All ferocity, all injured love, all vengeance and justice and hate are represented in that tense moment, when the sinuous creature darts high in the air upon the man who has refused to be human. It is a purple patch of passion. Olga Clarke does not utter a word for three minutes, but the air is vital with words. The symbolists have made a great triumph. . . . Mademoiselle Clarke is on vacation; the theatre has been bought up two months in advance, and "*La Femme de Serge*" will run another year."

Olga laughed.

"Marie, I wish I could translate this into French for thee. The man writes that my yellow silk, with the brown velvet spots, is like the skin of a panther, and that '*La Femme de Serge*' will run another year."

"I hope not," said Marie; "it requires that the dress for the third act shall be renewed and mended so often, and I fear that mademoiselle may one night catch her heel in the divan, and fall; and, besides, I should rather see mademoiselle the Duchess de Fabrè before the end of the year."

"His mother, the duchess, will call on me to-day; she has so written."

"Ah, that is well," said Marie, who took Olga's confidences as naturally as they were given. "She has seen you act? She is entranced; she comes to demand your hand for the duke—oh, he is so handsome; his

waist is so small, and his shoulders so broad, and his little, shiny boots! Oh, he is divine!"

"Oh, yes, the duchess saw me act—but only in the fourth act, where *La Femme de Serge* goes into the convent, and leaves the unfaithful one for whom she has sacrificed all. Madame de Fabr  writes that she will drive over from Ault, to ask a favor. I'm afraid that, if she had seen my big jump in the third act, she would not write so sympathetically." Olga held the photograph in her hands, from which all rings had been removed, as she spoke.

"How do you like this face?" she asked, suddenly.

Marie arose to examine the photograph. It was of a man of thirty, with humorous eyes, a strong, clear-cut chin, and a small mustache, of which Marie did not approve because it was uncurled.

"He is a good man," answered Marie, "but he is a foreigner—an American."

"I, too, am an American. My father was an American, and my mother, also; though she seemed French, she was born in New Orleans. Even, Marie, the great jump in the third act, which they call art, was practised over the rail fences on my father's farm in Ohio!"

"*Quel nom?*" cried Marie, in despair.

"Never mind the name; it is what the Japanese say when they wish you good morning. If I hadn't been sent to M ther S raphine and left an orphan, with my little money, and if I hadn't gone on the stage, I should still be an American girl away out in Ohio—probably married to Jeff, who is coming to see me, soon."

"Jeff! *Quel nom!*" said Marie, still looking disapprovingly at the photograph. "He is not so graceful as the duke. I could not love him. He wears a queer hat!"

"He is somewhat bold, probably—all Americans are bold at the age of thirty; they work hard in the American way. As you say, it is a good

face; he was brought up in my dear father's house—and he has always been so kind and good!"

"But he is not artistic; he has no temperament."

Olga laughed again; Marie's manner of using the cant of criticism, which she had picked up in a parrot fashion, always delighted her.

"I expect three visitors this afternoon—the duchess, to demand a favor; Fernand des L gu res, on the part of the duke, and Mr. Jefferson Dalton, an old friend, on his first tour in Europe. It is an embarrassment of riches."

"You will have accepted the duke before the American comes? Ah, it is a pity, all the same, that we should leave the stage. The papers say you are the greatest of the young actresses; that your art——"

Olga's eyes twinkled.

"Because I make a fine spring, in the third act, and almost knock down Guy Maille, who plays the *Tsar*! If I do not make him stagger, the audience do not applaud so much. And this is art! Marie, thou art good and kind, and thou hast helped me to be good in a way women need most to be good in the theatre, and thou art a friend, not merely a servant, and I tell thee that the life of the theatre is a false life. Suppose I believed that it was a noble thing to jump over a divan six nights out of the week, to make a flash of yellow with my train—how foolish I would be! '*La Femme de Serge*' is a silly play, too—how soon it will be forgotten, when all Paris has seen enough of my panther spring and my panther jump. And yet, why should I exchange this slavery—for I am the slave of the public—for the town house and the country houses of the Duke de Fabr ? To smile, to curtsy, to accept outworn traditions, to move in little grooves, to know that monseigneur is away with little Girofla of the Gaiet s—because in his set it is the fashion—while I am composed, *  la duchesse*, at Pau or Biarritz—oh, no! The life of the theatre is no more false than the life of the Faubourg. I

am no longer poor; I will choose my life. You don't understand, Marie!—why do I tire thee with my talk? Hast ever eaten buckwheat cakes, Marie?"

"But, no," said Marie, dazed by the strange question.

"With fresh maple syrup?"

"You laugh at me, mademoiselle. How should I know the dishes of savages?"

"Or hot corn? Have you ever heard an old mammy call out, 'Hot corn!' and bought it and ate it?"

"Mademoiselle amuses herself!"

"Well—perhaps. If you had ever read the story of the pomegranate seeds, which Proserpine ate when she was carried into Hades by Pluto, you would easily understand that the exiled American, having eaten of buckwheat cakes and hot corn in his own land, grows worn and haggard on the shore of the *pâté de foie gras* and the *soufflé*. Marie, have some sherbet for the duchess, and tell Mother Séraphine to come up while she is here. She will patronize the actress—I shall tell her that we Clarks have been dukes—the Dukes de Feltre! No, that tone is not worth taking; but I shall not be nice, for she would not help our good nuns in their bazaar, because Mother Séraphine says that the Holy Father is right in accepting the Republic!"

"Ah, the heretic!" said Marie, "but the duke, I am sure, is better. These hard mothers often have good sons."

"The duchess will soon be here. Ask Mother Séraphine not to leave me alone all the time. Sister Rose will give you the necessary refreshments."

"Ah, the *hôtel* of the duke in the Faubourg St. Germain is a marvel."

"But there are no buckwheat cakes there, Marie!"

II

THE Duchesse de Fabré was ushered by the anxious Marie into the part of the room in which Olga Clarke chose to receive her. The screen—that ornamented screen, of which the good

sisters were extremely proud—was wheeled somewhat forward, so as to make one end of the apartment much smaller. Olga arose and curtsied.

"The Duchesse de Fabré?"

"Madame de Fabré—charmed to see you, Mademoiselle Clarke." Marie pushed a chair over the smooth floor, and the duchess, a mass of mauve and purple, sank into it. She was not over fifty, with a long, clear-cut face that showed the ravages of pearl powder rather than time. Her penetrating, black eyes, the erectness of her head, and her smooth forehead distinguished her.

"I came in an automobile from Ault, and I am fortunate to find you at home—though it seems strange that——"

"*La Femme de Serge* should have her only home in a convent? Mother Séraphine lets me have my rooms here whenever I wish them. She has always been like a mother to me."

"A good woman, no doubt," said Madame de Fabré, tightening her lips, "but a Liberal in her principles, I fear. And, naturally, an actress seems out of place——"

"Madame has business with me, I believe; and my time is limited. I expect this afternoon the Count des Léguières; and, what is more, I must practise for an hour my great jump, in the third act of '*La Femme de Serge*.' If I do not, I shall grow stiff."

"Fernand! My nephew? And you receive gentlemen in this salon?"

"In the presence of a nun, of course," said Olga, demurely. "But Monsieur des Léguières may prefer to see me alone; he says that he has something of importance to tell me."

The duchess turned a shade paler under her powder.

"My dear, you will not marry Fernand. He is rich, it is true, and my son will be his heir—perhaps I shouldn't have told you that—he will go into the church as soon as his mother dies. She will not give her consent."

"He is over forty."

"But a mother has some rights,"

answered Madame de Fabré, haughtily; "at least, in France."

"In America, a mother would claim no such right as that."

"You will rob the church and destroy my son's prospects, if you accept Fernand."

A twinkle came into Olga's eyes. The duchess, like many women of her class, reared in a narrow family circle, was deliciously frank and selfish.

"Well, madame?"

"I came to you as a mother," Madame de Fabré began, bending as far forward as her symmetrical stays would permit, and clasping her lilac-gloved hands.

"As a French mother?"

"As a universal mother."

"That is different."

"You, who are so artistic, will understand. When I saw you, in the fourth act of '*La Femme de Serge*,' at the moment when, rather than live with the *Grand Duke Sergius*, who had proved unworthy of you, you knelt at the convent gate, I admired you."

"Nevertheless, the situation is impossible. No convent would receive a wife under such circumstances. The only real thing in the play is the jump in the third act. If we have time before you go, I will show you how I do it."

The duchess drew herself up.

"I am informed—and I believe it—that you have a good reputation."

Olga blushed, looked straight into Madame de Fabré's eyes, and said:

"I, too, have heard nothing against you—although some duchesses are—very queer; and, now that I have seen you, I am quite ready to believe in your virtue."

"Mademoiselle!"

The voice, forgetting its modulations, so startled Marie that she dropped one of the spoons she was placing on a table in front of the screen.

The duchess lowered her tone at the sound.

"Mademoiselle!"

Olga played with the gilded tassels of her robe, and was silent.

The duchess's face was red, and her hands trembled.

"Perhaps," Olga said, slowly, after the pause, "you think I ought to thank you. But, if people speak of me as you say, it deprives one of my speeches in '*La Femme de Serge*' of its force: 'An actress, monseigneur, has the unique privilege of seeming to be vicious, when she is as pure as snow—it is a privilege which a tender public willingly accords its favorites; it is not that the stage is evil, but the mind of the public is impure!'"

"I don't know," said the duchess, abruptly. "I perceive that I am dealing with an American, to whom nothing is sacred—and yet, you are my only hope!"

"Well, madame?"

"My son threatens to marry a horrible little dancer, *La Girofla*."

"Indeed? *La Girofla* is clever."

"Too clever. But my son is really interested in you, though he thinks that you admire—like—his cousin, Fernand, because Fernand has sent you books. If you would but encourage my son, he would drop *La Girofla*, who, otherwise, will marry him, I am sure. I know she will—my son is all for marriage. If he had not such bad taste and good principles, I should feel safer. Ah, you know not what it is to be a mother!"

"I appreciate the compliment; but what do you expect me to do?"

"You will have a good influence over him. Encourage him; keep him occupied. Let him give you what he will. He has just given *La Girofla* a cordon of black pearls! Let him follow you."

"And compromise me!"

"Ah, my dear mademoiselle, it will be good for your career! Suppose the papers say that you are *liée* with the young Duke de Fabré, it will not hurt you—more people will go to see you. You, who know the world so well, must know that actresses are more popular, the less character they have. I believe that you are a good

woman, but how few in Paris believe that *any* actress is good. You will have diamonds and a duke dangling after you, and, when he has broken with the vulgar La Girofla, you——"

"Can send him back to mama! *Chère maman!*"

"To marry him would be to ruin him. His family would not receive you. It would be unpleasant. You would not like it. No man of our family could marry an actress. It is different in England; we are more strict. No; a woman like you would suffer extremely as the wife of the Duke de Fabr . Everybody would believe you were bad before your marriage."

Olga tightened her grip on the pillow of the couch. Just then, Mother S raphine entered. She bowed slightly to the duchess. Mother S raphine, under her white bands, had a very sweet and cordial face; it froze toward the duchess. Mother S raphine loved humility; she also loved those moments of righteous pride, when the church faced a naughty world.

"Mademoiselle," she said, smiling at Olga, "the Count des L gu res. I will show him into the larger hall of the salon, and, if the Duchess de Fabr  does not mind, we shall chaperon you on this side, and talk politics until he goes. He says that he must catch the train for Dieppe, at five o'clock."

"Yes, yes; I will wait," answered Madame de Fabr , eagerly. "I have not yet finished my talk with Mademoiselle Clarke."

Marie was heard:

"Take this chair, *monsieur le com *. Madame will be here in a moment. I shall take this sherbet to the ladies—but, if you will have some——"

"No, thank you. I am in great haste," said a man's voice. "Ah, Mademoiselle Olga!"

"In a hurry, Monsieur des L gu res?"

"Too much of a hurry, mademoiselle, even to be gallant."

"You are always truly gallant," said Olga. The count was a small, slight man, clean-shaven, well-groomed, and with an air of kindness and simplicity that always attracted discriminating people.

"Things are in a bad way," he said, lowering his voice.

Strange to say, neither the duchess nor the nun was talking politics. Marie had gone out; there was a dead silence on the other side of the screen.

"I am not one to agree with you, monsieur," answered Olga, sitting very straight on her stiff chair. "The weather is fine, and 'La Femme de Serge' is a great success."

"Oh, it is of things more important I speak," answered Monsieur des L gu res, and he sucked his gold-headed cane for a minute, most disconsolately. "Of the honor of a noble family."

"The honor of no noble family can be more important to me than the welfare of a hard-working American girl."

"I speak of the de Fabr s."

On the other side of the screen, the duchess whispered, haughtily, to the mother superior:

"Go; this is not for you."

"It is proper that I should remain."

"I speak," resumed Monsieur des L gu res, "of my cousin, Camille de Fabr , whom you know."

"You mean that young idiot of a Duke de Fabr , who tried to bore me to death!"

"She is bad—all actresses are bad," whispered the duchess, furiously.

"You do not know the world, madame," said the mother superior; "some actresses are as good as the angels!"

"I mean my cousin, then, the Duke de Fabr ," said Monsieur des L gu res, with dignity. "He is in love with you."

"But I do not care for him!"

"Oh, the monster!" whispered the duchess.

"He is something of a fool, I admit; he is forever attaching him-

self to some woman or other not of his class, and wanting to marry her. Last year, it was Bel-Aimée, and the Bouffés. This year, it is——"

"Thank you, monsieur."

Olga looked the little man fair in the face—this smooth, little man who seemed to have no idea of the depth of his insult.

"He threatens to marry La Girofla, if his family does not consent to his marriage with you—and we shall consent. His mother may make a slight difficulty, but a family council will override that—for you, as we all know, are intelligent; you have the air of a lady, thanks to your training in this country—and, in a word, his alliance with you is a thousand times better than a horrible arrangement with La Girofla. The worst of Camille is that he is so conscientious that he always wishes to marry these people. You have been in no public scandal; and, when it is arranged, we shall make our Duke de Fabré a diplomatist at Washington or Peking. He threatens, in a telegram, to marry La Girofla to-morrow—if I do not give to him the consent of his family to marry you."

"*Mon Dieu!*" whispered the duchess, clutching at the screen, which toppled. Mother Séraphine tried to catch it, but in vain. It fell, and the *mondaine* and the *religieuse*, scurrying away in a most undignified manner, stood revealed.

The duchess recovered herself, and advanced toward her nephew.

"Fernand," she exclaimed, "is this true? Ah, yes, it must be! Fly to him, to say that I consent. He has the best blood of France in his veins—the blood of the Crusaders—and yet—But anything is better than the vulgar Girofla."

Olga stood beside her chair.

"Pardon me, madame," she said, softly; "I do not consent. The blood of a descendant of the Duke de Lauzun is not good enough for me. I refuse the alliance. Mademoiselle Girofla will suit him better."

"Think of it, mademoiselle!" im-

plored Fernand; "you will be a duchess—think of his châteaux, his villas at Biarritz and Nice. He will have all my money, by-and-bye. You should see his yacht and his vineyards of champagne——"

"Does he grow maple syrup and griddle cakes?" asked Olga, in solemn English. "There are some luxuries he cannot give me. No, madame, monsieur, I refuse."

"You cannot be in earnest!" cried the duchess. "Oh, save my son, save the honor of the de Fabrès!"

Marie entered, flushed and excited.

"Mademoiselle," she said, hurriedly, "the portress says that there is a gentleman in the parlor."

Olga's face lighted up.

"*Voilà!*" said Marie, and a tall young man, wearing a wide-brimmed drab hat and a gray suit of clothes, entered. He stood near the door, waiting, his eyes fixed on Olga, who, in her excitement, had walked behind the couch. Marie recognized him; he was the American of the photograph.

"You have grown, Olga," he said, in a mellow voice that filled the room. "Well, our house is ready in the old town, and I've come to tell you so."

It was certainly Jeff—the most honest, frankest, kindest, tenderest man in the world!—her friend of all these struggling years, her playmate in the well-remembered past.

Olga's eyes sparkled.

"Duchess," she said, "that is to be my American husband. You never saw my great jump in the third act, did you? '*Serge, enfin je te vois!*'" she shrieked. In an instant, she and her train had flashed high over the couch and into Mother Séraphine's arms.

"Break away!" said the American. "This is the real thing. How you used to take those rail fences, Olga!"

"She is impossible," commented the duchess; "this is as vulgar as Girofla."

"To console you, madame," Olga answered, with a smile, "I will tell you that La Girofla—it is in the *Figaro* there—eloped for Monte Carlo with the Austrian banker, Scheinfurth, yesterday. Mother Séraphine, Count des

Léguières—my future husband, Mr. Dalton!"

Mother Séraphine kissed Olga on both cheeks.

"My sweet child," she said; "it is well. You," she added, with a glance at the amazed duchess, "who have been so good on the stage, will, I am

sure, be equally good in your new state of life. We will, after the American manner, leave you for a short time alone with your fiancé."

"What can you expect?" murmured the duchess, as she left the salon. "What can you expect of a pupil of a nun who accepts the Republic?"



LOVE SONG OF ARCADY

MY soul is a breeze of night
 That slumbereth not, nor sleeps,
 But, wandering passionately alone,
 Unbroken vigil keeps;
 Till there comes a tender call
 From the wakening hills afar,
 The first, faint call of its love—the dawn,
 Led forth by a flaming star;
 And then my soul, at peace and free,
 And stirred with nameless melody,
 Is the early breeze that sings to thee
 A heart song, tenderly.

For thou art the morning light
 That maketh my soul rejoice;
 The glory of earth is this—thy face,
 Its music is thy voice!
 And now I fly to thy breast,
 As a wind from the southland blown,
 As the warm south wind to the waiting earth,
 Close, close to thy breast, mine own;
 And, behold, the sweets of flower and field,
 Deep-hid, their vernal treasure yield,
 And the heart of Summer, else concealed,
 Is all unto me revealed!

The pulse of the wild-bird's song
 Beats at thy throat—and there,
 As I lift my head, I feel a breath
 Of violets from thy hair;
 And, gentler still, the quick caress
 Of April skies at break of day,
 Unveiled within thy lustrous eyes!
 Oh, cast me not away,
 But let me, rather, at thy side—
 Where woodland dell and rippling tide
 To thee their holiest vows confide—
 Forevermore abide!

AUGUSTUS WIGHT BOMBERGER.

PROVIDENCE, AND MISS GREEN

By Rosamond Napier

IT was about half an hour before Martin Eld's guests might be expected to arrive, and he and Miss Green were by the open window in his study. The young fellow looked worried. This may have been due to the unfinished magazine article lying on his table, or to the undeniable sulkiness of his companion.

But, out in the garden, all was peace. The sky was that soft Autumn blue of which Summer will never guess the secret. The sun, lowering day by day, threw warm, golden sunshine across the lawn, where the peeling plane-tree cast its rich, olive-green shadow. There were Michaelmas daisies, and a mass of mauve China asters; delicate white Japanese anemones, fairy-petaled mallows, an untidy bed of overblown monthly roses and huge, chalky-blue agapanthi. All these reached and stretched themselves out in the sunshine, and the sad little sweet-acid song of a robin slipped through the tepid air like beads from a broken necklace.

But Martin heeded none of these things.

"Miss Green! Miss Green!" he exclaimed, with a world of reproach in his voice.

She still remained silent, and, I regret to say, scratched her head.

"I thought I had at length won your love," continued he, "and you reward me like this! You persist in talking, when I wish to write; you remain obstinately silent, when I wish you to talk. Is this thoughtful—kind?"

"Shut up!" remarked the lady, in a surly voice.

He raised a protesting hand, whereupon Miss Green leaned very far forward, and leered at him with evil, light-colored eyes. Then she shook herself, violently, flung up her head, and snapped at the air in a particularly vicious manner.

Perhaps, I should have explained that Miss Green is a remarkably fine parrot; and that, on more than one occasion, this same snapping sound has accompanied an obstinate inclination on the part of Martin's finger to bleed. Therefore, he now backed hastily, and came in very violent contact with his own writing-table—which had peculiarly sharp corners.

"Damn!" he muttered, gently rubbing the injured part.

Miss Green reared herself up on the tips of her clumsy, gray toes, and recovered her balance by a miracle.

"Serve—you—right, serve—you—right—Martin! Sly dog! Oh, you bad boy! Alleluia! Polly put the kettle on, and we'll all have tea. Glory be! Alleluia! Bow-wow-wow!"

She certainly must have associated with Salvationists at one time in her career.

Martin looked at her, in some irritation. She lapsed into an injured silence, making herself very squat, fluffing out every feather and lengthening those sinister, light-colored eyes, till they became pear-shaped.

Finding it impossible to drag out another word, the young fellow returned to his writing, with a half-stifled sigh.

The very instant he was seated—"Allegra! Allegra!" called Miss Green.

He jumped up immediately as, no doubt, that wicked bird knew he would. For, to Martin, Allegra was the sweetest name on earth. For him, it conjured up a delicate, oval face, with dark, dark eyes, a cloudy mass of blue-black hair, a voice as clear as a black-cap's; in short, Allegra Galignani, with all her youth, her mischief, her charm, and even the antique aunt with whom she had lived so long in this remote English village. All that was sweet in life seemed caught and woven into those seven little letters—and, alas, all that was bitter!

For Allegra was rich, rich; and Martin, miserably poor.

"Allegra! Allegra! De-e-e-ar Allegra! Pretty creature! Kiss Polly, kiss! kiss! kiss! Allegra de-e-e-ear. What's o'clock? Salvation forever! Praise the Lord! Bow-wow-wow-wow!" and Miss Green shot at Martin a glance of keen expectation for the monkey-nut she invariably had for good behavior.

And she had it. For the bird was destined for Allegra, and laboriously he had been teaching her to say pretty things to her future owner. Miss Green, however, preferred picking up all the little sentences she had no business to. She was stolidly stupid at lesson time, astoundingly sharp at any other.

Martin returned to his writing. He took a new pen, and, fitting it carefully into the holder, he dipped it twice into the ink. Inspiration was obstinate. He made several pyramids of little dots on the blotting-paper, and signed his name, a great many times. Finally, he rested his head on his hands, and sighed, heavily.

"Allegra! oh, Allegra! God, how I love her! It is no good! My life is always a failure—always! Oh, Allegra! Allegra!"

Whatever Miss Green thought of this foolish little exhibition, she said nothing. Her malicious-looking eyes were closed. She seemed asleep—or thinking.

Half an hour later, Martin was out, bareheaded, in the garden, receiving

his numerous guests. Miss Galignani and the antique aunt were there, in the brightest, sunniest part of the lawn. Why was it, he wondered, Allegra looked so different from those other girls? Was it anything to do with her flame-colored, chiffon parasol, the texture of her white dress, the bewitching tilt of that wonderful hat, with its immense scarlet poppies, or the perfect cut of two little shoes; or was it just perhaps the blood of the paternal Italian grandfather that ran in her veins? Oh, decidedly, Allegra was different, very different from those fresh-complexioned girls, with their ready-made boots and home-trimmed hats!

He managed to get to her side.

"Do you know, Mr. Eld, we are all wondering about you," cried Allegra, poking little holes in the lawn with her flame-colored parasol, and then patting them down with the toe of her patent-leather shoe.

"About me?" and his eyebrows were raised.

"Yes, about *you*! We wish to know why you, an impoverished bachelor—you know, you told me you were—are entertaining the neighborhood. It seems unusual. It can't surely be because you like it?" Allegra's head was on one side, and she was smiling deliciously, with that soft, dark look in her eyes that he knew so well.

"Is it so very unusual?" he queried. "If you wish to know, of course, I will tell you."

"I am dying to know," said Miss Galignani, seriously.

"To see you," he answered, simply.

Allegra changed color.

"That is very dear of you," she exclaimed, lightly; "but I suppose we can meet without a garden-party?"

Martin looked straight at her, and noticed for the hundredth time the entrancing way in which her dark hair grew around the white forehead.

"I thought I should have more chance of getting you to myself, like this," he said, boldly.

She laughed, not seeming to take his words very seriously.

"Do you know that is a very pretty speech, Mr. Eld? Shall I make you a curtsey? No, I think not—so many people seem to be looking our way!"

He sighed.

She looked at him in reproach.

He changed color.

"'Tis only that your comedy is my tragedy."

"Undoubtedly, we must turn it into farce."

"But how?"

Allegra shrugged her shoulders, and, opening the fiery parasol, smiled at him with lips and eyes.

"I haven't the faintest idea."

"The only farcical thing I know is Miss Green."

"And who, pray, is Miss Green?"

"Come and see," said Martin, darkly.

They went slowly across the lawn, and all eyes turned to look at that dreadful Miss Galignani, quite monopolizing poor Mr. Eld.

"I hope everything is all right," remarked Martin, carelessly. "I suppose the tea will go round, and all that sort of thing. This is not much in my line, you know," he concluded, rather vaguely.

"You should marry. What a lovely William Allen! May I pick it?"

Silently, he cut it, and scraped off each thorn, delicately, with his knife.

"Marry? On twopence a year?" and there was an odd accent of bitterness in his voice.

Miss Galignani tucked the rose into the bosom of her dress, before answering.

"You should save—not go launching out into garden-parties! Cut your garment according to your cloth."

"If I did, I should be up for indecency," he remarked, grimly.

Her eyelids flickered, and a dimple began to come, but apparently thought better of it.

"There are plenty of nice girls, who do not expect a life of luxury."

"Oh, clergymen's daughters, you mean," said he, discontentedly; "but then, they all have flat waists and big feet. I wonder why?"

"I wonder why?" she echoed, and

unconsciously her fingers slipped round the folded bit of orange satin at her own waist, and her great, dark eyes sought the tip of the little patent-leather shoes.

Somehow, they drifted into his study. Miss Green was forgotten by both. And Miss Green? Well, she watched them both in a stony silence, with unblinking, glassy eyes.

They stood at the open window. Allegra's white sleeve touched his coat; her hand, with all its gold curb-chains, and foolish little charms, hung quite close to his own.

"This is very shocking, leaving all your guests like this. I am afraid you are not a good host."

"I don't care!"

"All the old frumps will put their heads together. They will say they have never been to such a dull garden-party, and that they had known that it would be so all along!"

"I don't care about that, either," he returned, recklessly.

Allegra dimpled and raised her eyes to his. The scarlet poppies in her hat were all a-quiver.

"I wonder what you do care about?"

"Being here—being here," he whispered, hoarsely.

They slipped into one of those happy little silences.

Breaking into it came a long, long sigh.

Martin glanced at Allegra; Allegra at Martin. Clearly, it was from neither.

It came again, long, deep—very, very weary.

"But what is it?" she asked, with wide, startled eyes.

"I haven't the remotest idea!"

Again the heartbroken sigh. Then, a sepulchral voice from the corner said:

"Allegra! Allegra! God, how I love her! It is no good. My life is always a failure—always!"

Martin grew crimson with horror and mortification. His own words, and, good Lord! how grotesque they sounded, in the thick and rather indistinct voice of the parrot!

Allegra laughed, hysterically—immoderately.

"Is it—is it that parrot over there? I didn't know you had one. How long have you had it? How could you buy such an unspeakable creature! It looks as though its eyes were glass, with an old end of white braid twisted round them. And those great, gnarled, gray feet! Did you ever see such monstrosities? How I hate parrots! They bite, they squawk, they terrify me."

His heart was very sore.

"I am sorry for that," he said, slowly. "I had meant her for you."

Allegra stood motionless. Her lips were parted, and wave after wave of distressed color swept over her face.

"Oh, I'm sorry! I'm sorry!" she faltered. "I didn't know! I couldn't guess! I shall love to have her. I shall, indeed! See, we shall be great friends!"

She ran across to Miss Green, and before Martin could stop her, she lifted that lady bodily off her perch.

The sharp, curved nails dug into the young girl's hand, the great beak seemed ready to bite. Allegra's eyes were bright, and her cheeks pale with terror, but bravely she chattered on.

"You see, I am not really in the least afraid—not the least little bit in the world, am I, Polly? Oh, we shall be fine friends. Kiss, Polly, kiss!"

And lo! Miss Green put down her ugly poll in a very engaging fashion, and made a soft kissing sound against the young girl's cheek.

"De-e-e-ar Allegra! Pret-ty creature! Kiss! Kiss! De-e-e-ar Allegra!"

Allegra stood there, pleased and nervous. Even Martin recovered his equanimity.

"What pretty things you have taught her to say!"

She spoke too soon. Miss Green cocked her head sideways, slowly closing one eye.

"Martin, you're a damned fool!"

"No one knows it better than myself," he responded, gravely.

Miss Green looked inquisitively from one to the other.

"Oh, damn! Martin, you sly dog! Praise the Lord! What's o'clock?"

Alleluia! Go to the devil, and stay there—stay there! Let us be joyful! Glory be! Salvation forever! Allegra de-e-ar! Go to hell! Whew-w! Alleluia! Bow-wow-wow!"

Then Miss Green, looking around with an air of great satisfaction, proceeded to waddle up Allegra's sleeve.

"How tame she is! how wonderfully tame! O-oh! Aren't her claws a little sharp? O-o-oh! Of course, it's the fault of these sleeves! They're so thin, you know. Ah, Polly! Pray be careful! What friends we shall be—are, I mean!"

A furious color burned in her cheek; her lips were smiling, heroically. Never should poor Martin know what supreme agony Miss Green's toe-nails were causing.

"Do let me take her off," entreated he.

"Indeed, you will do nothing of the sort! Polly is coming out into the garden with me, to look after your neglected guests. She is mine now. I shall do just as I please with her." And, smiling, Allegra stepped out on the lawn.

"But her education is by no means complete."

"Then I shall complete it myself," remarked the young lady, decidedly.

"But she uses naughty words, sometimes!"

Allegra glanced at him, scornfully.

"Do you suppose she will forget them sooner with me or with you?"

The "old frumps" put up their lorgnettes and stared. Where had these two been? Certainly not in the dining-room having tea. Really, one did not know what girls of the present day were coming to. After monopolizing Mr. Eld for a good ten minutes, here came Miss Gallignani, radiant and chattering, across the lawn, an excited, green parrot balancing itself on her shoulder. What business had she to look so outrageously pretty, when she had all that money! Her dress, too, was absurd. That flame-colored parasol, those immense scarlet poppies in the white hat—why, it was hardly respectable!

Little did Allegra care for their black looks. Indeed, she scarcely noticed them. It was not long before she and the antique aunt took their departure; and on the back seat of the victoria was a large, brass cage, in which sat Miss Green, swearing vociferously.

During the next few days, Martin wrote in undisturbed peace. He was at such pains to congratulate himself on the fact, it may be supposed he missed Miss Green considerably, in his heart of hearts. But it is useless to deny that the magazine article progressed.

On the Tuesday following the garden-party, he received a letter from Allegra. Allegra wrote on thick, vellum-like paper. Her writing was lively and very black. This was the letter:

DEAR MR. ELD:

Ever since we met I have sat for two hours daily in a dark room. This, in the weather we have been having, is little short of heroic, as you, I am sure, will admit. However, the result is the completion of Miss Green's education. Can you come to tea this afternoon, in the capacity of school-inspector?

Sincerely yours,
ALLEGRA GALLIGNANI.

And, that afternoon, Martin set out with a heart as light as a schoolboy's. The sky was depressingly gray, the golden leaves were falling slowly to the ground, and, in the still, chilly air, was the unmistakable breath of Autumn. But what cared he? A letter from Allegra lay close to his heart. He was going to tea with Allegra. Allegra and he; he and Allegra! with only a parrot and an antique aunt somewhere as background. Martin whistled as he went along, and tossed a shilling to an astonished tramp.

He was shown into the drawing-room. It was empty. He amused himself by looking at the various photographs of the young girl whom he loved. Allegra, a solemn child, with wide eyes, a dark pigtail and long, black, silk legs; Allegra in court dress; Allegra in a tam-o'-shanter; Allegra on horseback; Allegra in *pueris naturalibus*, at

the age of two months! All with the same soft look in her dark eyes!

"Martin! Oh, you bad boy! Whe-w-w!" and, for the first time, he became conscious of Miss Green in the window. She seemed thoughtful and subdued.

In silence, she regarded her late master, fixedly; her eyes seemed glassier than ever. Then she walked sideways to the end of her perch, and ducked.

"Scratch a poll!" she coaxed.

He complied; but his thoughts were far away, with Allegra. What could she be doing? His eyes roamed out of the window. He watched the gardener sweeping up the fallen leaves, and the under-gardener taking them away in the wheelbarrow; and he suddenly became aware that Miss Green was talking—talking very soft, and low.

"Martin! Martin! You're breaking my heart. Many waters cannot quench love. So poor, so poor, so po-o-or! 'Nough for both! De-e-ar Martin. I love you. De-e-ar."

He stood transfixed.

"Martin! Martin! 'nough for both! De-e-ar Martin!" continued Miss Green, in a slightly sharper key.

And still he paid no heed.

Miss Green's eyes blazed. She had repeated the lesson, and where was that monkey-nut?

"Polly, put the kettle on! Salvation forever! Go to hell and stay there—stay there! Serve you right! Oh, you bad boy! Alleluia! Praise the Lord! Go to the devil! Good afternoon. How d'you do? Allegra! Whew-w! Bow-wow-wow. Bow-wow-wow-wow-wow!"

Miss Green was by this time nearly frantic. Her clumsy, gray feet trampled up and down; she stood on tiptoe, she snapped her beak, she beat the air furiously with her short, green wings. Her eyes, round and white, with glistening black pupils, blazed. Every feather was bristling. She had been through her repertory, and where was that monkey-nut?

Martin stood there, turning from white to red, from red to white. What did it all mean?

"Bad boy!" screamed the lady, hoarsely. "Allegra! Allegra!"

And Allegra came in. A brilliant carmine burned in her cheek, her dark hair seemed cloudier, her eyes softer than ever.

"Polly, you bad bird! What are you doing, making such an evil noise?"

"She has been talking," said Martin.

Allegra blushed anew.

"I—I have taken great pains with her. I hope she did me credit."

"She said something about 'enough

for both,' and 'breaking my heart,'" said he, in a voice that was not quite steady.

"Miss Green is right—quite right!" and Allegra, with the tears glistening in her sweet, dark eyes, and a tremulous smile on her lips, held out both her hands.

"It was Providence!" said she.

"And Miss Green?" said he.

"Miss Green, you must give us your blessing!" cried Allegra.

But Miss Green, remembering the monkey-nut, snapped:

"Go to hell!" and closed her eyes.



NIRVANA OF THE SUBURBS

SCRUB green thin-veiled o'er sands of level white;
 Starved woodlands, gaunt and threaded with the gray
 Of friary streams upon their slumbrous way
 Southward to sea just verging on the sight;
 Ribbons of daisies, fresh, relieving, bright
 In the warm sunglow of a June-dawn day;
 The haughty gables of some palace gay
 Surveying lorn hovels from their lordly height;
 Silence, monotony's monastic spell,
 Peace primitive, a rural refuge calm;
 Far from the social crush as anchorite's cell,
 To over-functioned nerves a soothing balm:
 No wonder that, wooed by such tranquil vesture,
 The weary seek the suburbs for a rest-cure.

CHARLES EDWARD BARNES.



HER OBSERVATION

HE—Yes, she is a widow, but I don't think she needs much sympathy—she knows how to look out for Number One!

SHE—That is quite evident from the way she is looking out for Number Two.



MISS VAN DER WHOOP—Yes, Miss Binns, I am the youngest member of one of the oldest families in New York.

MISS BINNS (*envious*)—I don't doubt that it's *the* oldest family—if you're the youngest member!

SONNETS TO THE SEA

By Marvin Dana

I LOVE thee, O thou Sea, the world's so gracious soul;
Thou art the flowing page, whereon God's cosmic fancies
Are writ by His own finger; there my eager glances
Oft read, and guess, in part, the meaning of the scroll.
Thy waters are a mirror, o'er whose face the whole
Creation's subtle scheme in glinting image dances;
Thy rhythmic rage in storm, thy rest in windless trances,
These picture me thy God and His divine control.

Yea, thou, O Sea, art symbol, proof of source divine.
The very pulse of life is in those waves of thine,
Within thy depths the womb whence earthly life emerges;
Thy coiling zone of strength the grosser world sustains;
The blood of being swells, and throbs within thy surges.
God's splendid mystery thy heart, O Sea, contains.

II

A bride wast thou, O Sea, a warm and eager bride;
Thy virgin deeps were thrilled, they trembled to caressing.
The sun, thy lord and master, brought thee nuptial blessing
In mighty, flaming kisses. Blissful was thy pride
To win his godly pleasure; naught was there denied
Within those wooing arms, until his passioned pressing
Swift made thee swoon with joy, or waked thee to confessing
What ecstasy was thine, with love thy tender guide.

I fain would linger musing on this theme divine.
The essence of delight was his, thy lord's, and thine;
The sacred zeal of love was found in his embraces,
And thou wast purest virgin, tremulous to yield.
Within that holy marriage lived the seed whence traces
The all of life and love earth's æons have revealed.

III

O Sea, from primal chaos thou the first wast free,
First finding gentle calm amid creation's rages.
Thy billows breathed a song, the slumber song of ages—
The cradle of the land thy swaying deeps, O Sea.
Thou layest long in languor, sweet maternity,
Soft anguish nourishing thy love's so wondrous gages.
Thy pregnant pains as prophets warned the world's new stages.
Thy motherhood thou knewest: earth unborn in thee.

THE SMART SET

The love a tender child unto its mother owes
 I give to thee with honor. Thine the fruitful throes
 Whence issued every germ, the source of all things living.
 Thy waters swarmed with fishes; then the land crept forth,
 When thou hadst fashioned it; and with it, by thy giving,
 Came every bird and beast, and man to crown thy worth.

IV

Thou art a steadfast mother, Sea so strong and true;
 Thy breasts ne'er cease to feed the children thou hast given;
 And ne'er our bonds of life from thy great heart are riven.
 But ever thou art faithful, ever giv'st anew.
 Thy springs, the milk of earth, are constant, coursing through
 The world's so thirsty veins, and fondly thou hast striven
 To grant us all thy riches; by thy heart-beats driven
 Thy powers pulse in us—our life to thee still due.

Thou mother of the world, we children born of thee
 Our grateful praises bring to such maternity.
 Thou art the type of love, that finds its hallowed pleasure
 In gifts of ceaseless care; so generous thou art
 Thy bounty's rushing flood the earth may never measure;
 The wells of being stream from thy tremendous heart.

V

I find thee everywhere, thou Sea, the limitless,
 The continents of earth are only scattered phrases
 That deck thy poemed vastness. O'er the earth, thy mazes
 Wind in brook and river; these 'neath yearning stress
 Are ever hastening, with happy eagerness,
 To aid thy work of love; the air in changing phases
 Bears mist and rain and dew. The earth's long gladness praises
 The every dear device by which thou com'st to bless.

O Sea so penetrant, pervasive, permanent,
 With subtle salt of strength thy greater torrents blent,
 Symbolic salt of life thy drops contain forever.
 Thy moisture quickens all, thou'rt nature's living wine.
 The every being doomed from thee its life to sever
 Must stiffen, fade and die—the vital grace is thine.

VI

Thou gravely swinging Sea, whose currents ever wind,
 Within thy thrilling soul of waves forever flowing,
 Unveiled the mysteries to thee their worth are showing.
 Thy ever-rhythmed motion tells of truth divined;
 Thy spirit's holy search in thee doth surely find
 A clue to love's own heart. Thy waters in their going
 Are tending toward that potency; to its charm is owing
 Thy restless mood of marching—sway so strong, so kind.

Ye strangely creeping Tides, on-drawn by moon and sun,
How beautiful your faith in journeys never done!

All else may rest aweary, ye, in mobile fashion,
Are following your love, forever are the same.

Untiring in your effort, steadfast in your passion,
The love 'twixt earth and heaven ye, O Tides, proclaim.

VII

Eternity and time! of these, O Sea, thy song.

Erstwhile, thy storm-beat waves with awful truth related
The chaos' clamored shocks, how atoms fought and hated;
Thy tempest's roar was echo of that shrieking throng.

But now thy calm enralls me. Conquered is the wrong;

Thy crooning billows breathe the joy that God has fated

To crown the cosmic toil: repose for all created,
That holy peace for which worlds, men and angels long.

O Sea, so gently fair, I listen to the phrase

Thou softly murmurest; I hear thee tell of days

Undying, glad with light, of blessed days eternal,

When soul of me shall float forever on thy breast,

Immortal Sea of space, in ecstasy supernal—

Thy rocking surge my cradle, for unending rest.



AN EVERY-DAY AFFAIR

TWO hearts chanced to meet in a lonely place, and struck up an acquaintance. One heart was small, hard and tough; the other large, soft and tender. Under ordinary conditions, there would have been little to attract either to the other, for the tough heart was inclined to regard the tender heart with contempt, while the soft heart was a little afraid of the hard one. However, they were thrown together a great deal, and, finally, grew used to each other's differences.

One day, when they had become quite intimate—to the point, in fact, of throbbing in unison—the large heart, in a spirit of elephantine playfulness, made a feint of stabbing the other, with a toy dagger of jealousy. Instantly, the small heart flew into a terrible passion, and, turning on the large heart, struck it such a deadly blow that it was broken into bits.

Then the small heart swaggered away, saying to the world in general:

"See how I serve any one who presumes to trifle with my altitudinous honor. I may be little, but—oh, my!"

H. G.



MARRIAGE is a condition to which half of the world looks forward in fond anticipation, while the larger part of the other half regards it with retrospective regret.

VIGILIA

STILL let me dream of her,
 O winds of Summer, tangling rose and star!
 Night, let your witcheries but minister
 New harmonies to echo her afar!

Still let me dream of her,
 Though in the sun fame's banners white be furled;
 Though joy and laughter cease, the little purr
 Of cities, and the frothing of the world;

Though trumpets rend my ears
 With Titan strife of passions; though the hours
 Crush me with Scythian chariot wheels; the years
 Beat all earth's weeping on my head in showers;

Yea, though Life fall away,
 Into a shadowy world of things that were;
 Though Night be heaped in chaos on the Day,
 Still let me dream—still let me dream of her!

THOMAS WALSH.



BATHOS

"SUPPOSE you were taking a bath——"

"Well?"

"—and suppose you lost the soap in the tub——"

"No, no! I never did such a foolish thing."

"Of course, I understand; but just *suppose* you did."

"That's absurd! I never did such a thing, I tell you; it is impossible to suppose it!"

"Now, listen—just for the sake of argument, let us suppose that you lost the soap, while——"

"But, sir, I will not agree to an absurdity for the sake of argument or anything else! Go away! I don't want to argue with you!"

"I don't care whether you do or not! I insist upon arguing about that soap!"

"Then, confound it, go out and argue with a wood pile, or a horse-post, or anything else that can't get away from you!"

"You talk like a bone-headed fool! I don't believe you know what soap is, anyway!"

"Sir, you are a ——!"

(Curtain.)

Moral: It takes two to make a quarrel, but almost any two will do.

ATCHOUM!

Par Michel Triveley

“**M**AIS, maman——”
“Il n’y a pas de, ‘Mais, maman!’ tu épouseras M. Louis!”

“Pourtant——”

“Pourtant quoi? Est-ce qu’il te déplaît?”

“Nullement—comme camarade ou comme danseur.”

“Petite sotte! Et pourquoi, je te prie, ne ferait-il pas un mari parfait?”

“Je ne peux pas te dire au juste——”

“Naturellement! tu ne peux pas dire! C’est ce qu’il fallait t’amener à constater toi-même. Si tu avais de bonnes raisons à m’opposer, tu saurais bien les faire valoir, je suppose!”

“Ce ne sont pas des raisons, maman. Ce sont des sentiments, des impressions. Que veux-tu? je sens que je ne serai pas heureuse avec lui!”

“Voyez-vous ça! Est-ce que tu aimerais quelqu’un d’autre, par hasard!”

“Grands dieux! non.”

“Alors, toutes tes objections n’ont pas le sens commun! Comment! voici un garçon qui est charmant à tous égards, intelligent, riche, et, qui plus est, le fils d’une de mes plus intimes amies; il y a dix ans que, de part et d’autre, dans les deux familles, nous souhaitons ce mariage entre vous; et, par caprice, pour rien, uniquement pour contrecarrer nos projets, mademoiselle se dérobe! Eh bien! non, ma petite! Ton père ni moi nous ne te laisserons faire ainsi à ta tête—et si tu refuses de nous obéir, au moins faudra-t-il que nous sachions pourquoi.”

“Mais——”

“Il suffit! Rentre dans ta chambre et réfléchis à ce que je viens de te faire entendre. Demain nous reprendrons la conversation, et j’espère que tu seras plus raisonnable.”

L’ordre était formel, et à voir les sourcils contractés de sa mère, Mlle. Fanny Courbal comprit que ce n’était pas le moment de répliquer. Force donc lui fut de se soumettre. Mais, une fois enfermée chez elle, les larmes qu’elle avait refoulées jusqu’alors jaillirent tout-à-coup, et ce fut au milieu des plus amers sanglots qu’elle s’écria, en se jetant sur son lit:

“Non! non! jamais! Je ne l’aime pas! Maman est trop cruelle, vraiment!”

II

POUVAIT-ELLE se douter, Mlle. Fanny Courbal, pendant qu’elle se désolait ainsi, prenant Dieu à témoin des souffrances morales qu’une mère trop humaine prétendait lui infliger, qu’à la même heure, dans une maison voisine, une scène à peu près analogue venait aussi de se passer?

“Et pourquoi refuses-tu de l’épouser?” disait M. Courtry à son fils Louis.

“Mais, papa—parce que je ne l’aime pas!”

“Tu ne l’aimes pas? Voyez-vous ça! Et comment donc faut-il qu’elles soient, je te prie, pour que tu les aimes? Une enfant délicieuse, jolie comme un cœur!”

“Mais si ce n’est pas mon genre de beauté!”

“Ah! ah! Monsieur a des genres

de beauté qu'il préfère? Ce sont peut-être des cheveux couleur d'acajou qu'il aurait fallu à Fanny pour qu'elle fit impression sur toi?"

"Mais non, papa. Je ne dis pas ça. Je reconnais même que c'est une jeune fille charmante, et comme danseuse je l'apprécie beaucoup. J'éprouve même de l'agrément à causer avec elle, lorsque, par hasard, nous nous rencontrons en visite. Mais de là à l'épouser, avoue qu'il y a un monde!"

"Avoue plutôt que tu en aimes une autre!"

"Mais non. Je n'aime personne. Et même je ne suis pas désireux d'aimer encore. Qu'est-ce qui me presse, d'ailleurs, de me marier?"

"Ce qui te presse? C'est moi! Pour qu'un jour ou l'autre je vienne à apprendre que tu t'es bêtement toqué d'une jeune fille sans dot. Ah! non, par exemple! . . . Comment! nous avons la chance que nos amis les Courbal, qui sont dans une position magnifique, aient une fille; ce mariage qui resserre les liens entre les deux familles nous comble de joie, ta mère et moi; et, sans raison valable, parce que monsieur a besoin d'un genre de beauté spéciale pour s'emballer, cette union ne se ferait pas? Eh bien! mon cher, je te préviens que si tu refuses je te coupe net les vivres. Plus un sou, tu entends? Et, maintenant, je te donne jusqu'à demain pour réfléchir!"

III

C'EST toujours l'éternelle histoire de la raison du plus fort. Fanny pouvait-elle résister longtemps devant la volonté arrêtée de ses parents? Et quant à Louis—dame! l'argument décisif employé par M. Courtry à la fin de son discours avait tout de même fait sur lui son effet.

"Plus un sou! je te coupe les vivres!"

Donc, des deux côtés, il fallut bien céder.

Mais si le jeune homme et la jeune fille durent se rendre, ils ne se rendirent que contraints et forcés, et avec le

secret espoir d'un événement quelconque qui surgirait durant le temps des fiançailles pour rompre à temps ces liens qu'on leur imposait contre leur gré.

Fanny n'était pas sans avoir lu des romans où, au dernier moment, tout s'arrangeait toujours; quant à Louis, il avait son idée.

"Je me rendrai tellement insupportable," pensait-il, "que c'est la jeune fille qui, d'elle-même, me refusera; comme ça, papa ne pourra pas me reprocher mon entêtement, et je serai censé, au contraire, y avoir mis du mien!"

"Eh bien! laissons un peu ces enfants seuls ensemble," avaient dit les parents après la demande officielle.

"Voyons, qu'est-ce que je pourrais bien faire pour lui déplaire?" pensait Louis.

Mais il n'eut pas besoin de chercher plus longtemps la phrase maladroite dont il avait besoin; Fanny le tira tout de suite d'embarras.

"C'est par ordre de mes parents que j'ai consenti à vous épouser, cher monsieur."

"Tiens! justement comme moi, mademoiselle!"

"Je ne vous aime pas."

"Moi non plus."

"Ah! quel bonheur!"

"Comme je suis content!"

On devine à quoi devait aboutir un entretien commencé de cette façon; au bout de cinq minutes les jeunes gens étaient devenus les meilleurs amis du monde et, s'entendant ensemble à merveille, avaient déjà machiné leur petit complot.

"Nous laissons croire à nos familles que nous nous plaçons. Devant le monde nous passons même pour des fiancés extrêmement épris. Et cette façon d'agir nous conduit tout naturellement ainsi jusqu'au jour du mariage. A ce moment nous nous rendons à la mairie, et quand on nous pose la formule sacramentelle: 'Monsieur, consentez-vous à prendre pour épouse Mlle. Fanny Courbal?' un 'non!' magistral!—étonnement! stupeur! rage! Mais on se trouve en présence d'un

fait acquis. Et comme il n'y a plus à revenir sur la question, il faut bien qu'on se résigne à nous laisser tranquilles."

Et Louis, garçon madré, ajoutait en lui-même:

"Comme pendant le temps des fiançailles papa m'a donné tout l'argent que je lui demandais, je fais là-dessus des économies, quitte à rogner sur les fleurs et la corbeille. D'où un bon magot de reste! Et si, dans sa colère, après le 'non' formulé, l'auteur de mes jours me coupe les vivres pendant quelques mois, mon porte-monnaie, rempli au préalable, n'en restera pas dégarni pour cela!"

"Eh bien! avez-vous causé gentiment?" firent M. et Mme. Courbal et M. et Mme. Courtry en ouvrant la porte du salon.

"Mais oui; nous avons même découvert chez nous une foule d'idées semblables!" dit Fanny.

"Et mademoiselle est tout-à-fait charmante!" ajouta Louis d'un air galant.

"Parbleu!" fit M. Courtry.

Et se tournant vers les parents de la jeune fille:

"Tout-à-fait pincé, mon fils! Depuis huit jours qu'il sait que ce mariage est en question, il ne fait que d'en rêver!"

"C'est comme ma fille!" répliqua Mme. Courbal; "dès que je lui ai parlé de votre fils."

Un regard significatif fut échangé entre les jeunes gens, et ils se prirent la main en se regardant dans le blanc des yeux d'un air inspiré, pendant que les parents, à l'autre bout de la pièce, se mettaient à parler dot et budget.

"Pourvu que je n'éclate pas de rire!" faisait Fanny tout bas.

"Tenez-vous! tenez-vous!" répondait Louis; "nous sommes perdus s'ils devinent notre stratagème!"

IV

Le grand jour est arrivé.

Dans le grand salon d'attente de la mairie les deux familles sont déjà ré-

unies; se sont joints à elles les témoins des mariés ainsi qu'une foule d'amis et de proches.

C'est à qui félicitera les futurs époux naturellement.

"Sont-ils heureux!"

"Un couple si assorti!"

"Toutes les garanties de bonheur!"

Ce sont aussi des extases d'admiration sur le physique de la jeune fille—madame tout-à-l'heure—qui n'a jamais été si en beauté; quant au jeune homme, un mari futur, tout le monde loue sa bonne tenue et son élégante prestance.

Quel dommage, pourtant, qu'il soit si enrhumé! Cela tombe mal, en effet! Et il est désagréable, à un moment si solennel, d'avoir les yeux qui pleurent et d'être obligé de se moucher toutes les trois minutes.

"Pauvre ami, pauvre ami!" dit tout bas Fanny. "Votre 'non' sera terne. Je vois cela d'ici!"

"En effet! Ce maudit coryza m'enlève un peu de mes moyens. J'ai pourtant dormi toute la nuit avec un bonnet de coton sur la tête. Mais, lancé d'une voix vibrante ou faible, un 'non' est toujours un 'non,' et le résultat sera le même. Ayez donc confiance, et, dès ma réponse, regardez l'ahurissement de la famille. Je vous assure que ça en vaudra la peine!"

Une porte s'ouvrit, et les assistants vinrent prendre place dans la salle de mariage. Brouhaha. Chacun s'assied, selon son degré de parenté, à l'endroit assigné.

Chuchotements! Emotion dans la famille! Les mamans, sur le point de s'attendrir, ont déjà la larme à l'œil.

Louis et Fanny, les deux héros de la journée, bien que riant tous deux en dessous et se faisant des petits signes de connivence, ont pris le maintien grave qui convient.

L'huissier paraît et annonce d'une voix de stentor:

"Monsieur le Maire!"

On se lève. On se rassied. Lecture des articles du Code. Enfin, nous y voici.

"Mlle. Fanny Courbal, consentez-vous à prendre pour époux M. Louis Courtry?"

"Oui, monsieur."

Un "oui" gracieux, léger, aimable et résolu en même temps, et, dès qu'il a été dit, un murmure flatteur court dans l'assemblée.

"Monsieur Louis Courtry, consentez-vous à prendre pour épouse Mlle. Fanny Courbal?"

Instant suprême!

Fanny regarda Louis d'un air anxieux.

On se haussait instinctivement dans l'assistance pour apercevoir la physionomie du marié.

"Comment va-t-il lancer son 'oui'? Avec force et décision, sans doute?"

Louis se rendit compte d'une façon très nette de la curiosité qu'il suscitait. Une seconde d'hésitation—juste assez pour préparer son effet—et il ouvrit la bouche, prêt à jeter à la face du représentant de la loi et de toute cette foule réunie le "non!" théâtral qui devait, comme une bombe soudaine, faire une énorme explosion.

"N——"

Maudit rhume de cerveau! La bouche ouverte ne put, hélas! se refermer au gré de son possesseur. Et, au lieu de la négation sur laquelle tant d'espoirs divers se fondaient, on n'entendit qu'un formidable:

"Atchoum!"

"Dieu vous bénisse, monsieur!" fit le maire, qui n'était pas ennemi d'une bonne plaisanterie.

Et il ajouta, en souriant:

"Au nom de la loi, vous êtes unis!"

"Hein?"

Personne dans l'assistance ne pouvant soupçonner les projets ténébreux du jeune homme, n'était-il pas naturel qu'on eût pris son éternuement pour un consentement?

D'ailleurs, l'inclinaison de tête instinctive qui accompagne générale-

ment les expansions nasales de cette nature devait tout naturellement passer pour une forme muette d'acquiescement.

Quelques paroles bien senties du magistrat pour souhaiter aux nouveaux époux tout le bonheur dont ils étaient dignes, et les embrassements des parents, tantes, oncles, cousins et cousines commencèrent.

Enfin, tout fut terminé, et Louis et Fanny purent s'isoler un instant.

"C'est indigne!" cria Fanny.

"Pardon!" gémit Louis.

"Ainsi donc, nous voilà mariés malgré nous!"

"Mais je ne l'ai pas fait exprès, je vous le jure! Maudit éternuement! Atchoum! atchoum!"

Le pauvre garçon faisait pitié à voir!

"Evidemment, ce n'est pas votre faute," dit Fanny, "et vous êtes aussi à plaindre que moi, mon ami!"

"Qu'allons-nous devenir? Se marier sans amour, c'est affreux! Si, du moins, maintenant que la chose est faite, j'avais l'espérance de pouvoir un jour éprouver pour vous——"

"Si, de mon côté aussi, je pouvais entrevoir l'espérance——"

A ce moment, ils se regardèrent avec attention, et voilà que les invités, en se pressant pour le défilé, les poussèrent l'un contre l'autre, et que leurs visages se frôlèrent.

"Oh, Louis!—oser m'embrasser!"

Elle avait pris un air de reproche.

Mais, malgré elle, elle se sentit toute troublée.

Un silence de quelques instants.

"Après tout, qui sait?" firent-ils, un peu désorientés, et tout en se pressant les mains, "c'est peut-être un bonheur que cet 'atchoum!'—et les parents savent mieux que les enfants ce qui doit leur convenir!"



DOING HIMSELF CREDIT

"Do you have any trouble in living beyond your income?"

"No. It bothered me quite a little at first, but now I do it splendidly."

A GHOST OF A CHANCE

By O. Henry

“**A**CTUALLY, a *hod*!” repeated Mrs. Kinsolving, pathetically.

Mrs. Bellamy Bellmore arched a sympathetic eyebrow. Thus she expressed condolence and a generous amount of apparent surprise.

“Fancy her telling, everywhere,” recapitulated Mrs. Kinsolving, “that she saw a ghost in the apartment she occupied here—our choicest guest-room—a ghost, carrying a *hod* on its shoulder—the ghost of an old man in overalls, smoking a pipe and carrying a *hod*! The very absurdity of the thing shows her malicious intent. There never was a Kinsolving that carried a *hod*. Every one knows that Mr. Kinsolving’s father accumulated his money by large building contracts, but he never worked a day with his own hands. He had this house built from his own plans; but—oh, a *hod*! Why need she have been so cruel and malicious?”

“It is really too bad,” murmured Mrs. Bellmore, with an approving glance of her fine eyes about the vast chamber done in lilac and old gold. “And it was in this room she saw it! Oh, no, I’m not afraid of ghosts. Don’t have the least fear on my account. I’m glad you put me in here. I think family ghosts so interesting! But, really, the story does sound a little inconsistent. I should have expected something better from Mrs. Fischer-Suympkins. Don’t they carry bricks in *hods*? Why should a ghost bring bricks into a villa built of marble and stone? I’m so sorry, but it makes me think that age is beginning to tell upon Mrs. Fischer-Suympkins.”

101

“This house,” continued Mrs. Kinsolving, “was built upon the site of an old one used by the family during the Revolution. There wouldn’t be anything strange in its having a ghost. And there was a Captain Kinsolving who fought in General Greene’s army, though we’ve never been able to secure any papers to vouch for it. If there is to be a family ghost, why couldn’t it have been his, instead of a bricklayer’s?”

“The ghost of a Revolutionary ancestor wouldn’t be a bad idea,” agreed Mrs. Bellmore; “but you know how arbitrary and inconsiderate ghosts can be. Maybe, like love, they are ‘engendered in the eye.’ One advantage of those who see ghosts is that their stories can’t be disproved. By a spiteful eye, a Revolutionary knapsack might easily be construed to be a *hod*. Dear Mrs. Kinsolving, think no more of it. I am sure it was a knapsack.”

“But she told everybody!” mourned Mrs. Kinsolving, inconsolable. “She insisted upon the details. There is the pipe. And how are you going to get out of the overalls?”

“Sha’n’t get into them,” said Mrs. Bellmore, with a prettily suppressed yawn; “too stiff and wrinkly. Is that you, Felice? Prepare my bath, please. Do you dine at seven at Clifftop, Mrs. Kinsolving? So kind of you to run in for a chat before dinner! I love those little touches of informality with a guest. They give such a home flavor to a visit. So sorry; I must be dressing. I am so indolent I always postpone it until the last moment.”

Mrs. Fischer-Suympkins had been

the first large plum that the Kinsolvings had drawn from the social pie. For a long time, the pie itself had been out of reach on a top shelf. But the purse and the pursuit had at last lowered it. Mrs. Fischer-Suympkins was the heliograph of the smart society parading corps. The glitter of her wit and actions passed along the line, transmitting whatever was latest and most daring in the game of peep-show. Formerly, her fame and leadership had been secure enough not to need the support of such artifices as handing around live frogs for favors at a cotillion. But, now, these things were necessary to the holding of her throne. Besides, middle-age had come to preside, incongruous, at her capers. The sensational papers had cut her space from a page to two columns. Her wit developed a sting; her manners became more rough and inconsiderate, as if she felt the royal necessity of establishing her autocracy by scorning the conventionalities that bound lesser potentates.

To some pressure at the command of the Kinsolvings, she had yielded so far as to honor their house by her presence, for an evening and night. She had her revenge upon her hostess by relating, with grim enjoyment and sarcastic humor, her story of the vision carrying the hod. To that lady, in raptures at having penetrated thus far toward the coveted inner circle, the result came as a crushing disappointment. Everybody either sympathized or laughed, and there was little to choose between the two modes of expression.

But, later on, Mrs. Kinsolving's hopes and spirits were revived by the capture of a second and greater prize.

Mrs. Bellamy Bellmore had accepted an invitation to visit at Cliff-top, and would remain for three days. Mrs. Bellmore was one of the younger matrons, whose beauty, descent and wealth gave her a reserved seat in the holy of holies that required no strenuous bolstering. She was generous enough thus to give Mrs. Kinsolving

the accolade that was so poignantly desired; and, at the same time, she thought how much it would please Terence. Perhaps it would end by solving him.

Terence was Mrs. Kinsolving's son, aged twenty-nine, quite good-looking enough, and with two or three attractive and mysterious traits. For one, he was very devoted to his mother, and that was sufficiently odd to deserve notice. For others, he talked so little that it was irritating, and he seemed either very shy or very deep. Terence interested Mrs. Bellmore, because she was not sure which it was. She intended to study him a little longer, unless she forgot the matter. If he was only shy, she would abandon him, for shyness is a bore. If he was deep, she would also abandon him, for depth is precarious.

On the afternoon of the third day of her visit, Terence hunted up Mrs. Bellmore, and found her in a nook actually looking at an album.

"It's so good of you," said he, "to come down here and retrieve the day for us. I suppose you have heard that Mrs. Fischer-Suympkins scuttled the ship before she left. She knocked a whole plank out of the bottom with a hod. My mother is grieving herself ill about it. Can't you manage to see a ghost for us while you are here, Mrs. Bellmore—a bang-up, swell ghost, with a coronet on his head and a cheque-book under his arm?"

"That was a naughty old lady, Terence," said Mrs. Bellmore, "to tell such stories. Perhaps you gave her too much supper. Your mother doesn't really take it seriously, does she?"

"I think she does," answered Terence. "One would think every brick in the hod had dropped on her. It's a good mammy, and I don't like to see her worried. It's to be hoped that the ghost belongs to the hod-carriers' union, and will go out on a strike. If he doesn't, there will be no peace in this family."

"I'm sleeping in the ghost-chamber," said Mrs. Bellmore, pensively.

"But it's so nice I wouldn't change it, even if I were afraid, which I'm not. It wouldn't do for me to submit a counter story of a desirable, aristocratic shade, would it? I would do so, with pleasure, but it seems to me it would be too obviously an antidote for the other narrative to be effective."

"True," said Terence, running two fingers thoughtfully into his crisp, brown hair; "that would never do. How would it work to see the same ghost again, minus the overalls, and have gold bricks in the hod? That would elevate the spectre from degrading toil to a financial plane. Don't you think that would be respectable enough?"

"There was an ancestor who fought against the Britishers, wasn't there? Your mother said something to that effect."

"I believe so; one of those old chaps in raglan vests and golf trousers. I don't care a continental for a continental, myself. But the mother has set her heart on pomp and heraldry and pyrotechnics, and I want her to be happy."

"You are a good boy, Terence," said Mrs. Bellmore, sweeping her silks close to one side of her, "not to beat your mother. Sit here by me, and let's look at the album, just as people used to do twenty years ago. Now, tell me about every one of them. Who is this tall, dignified gentleman leaning against the horizon, with one arm on the Corinthian column?"

"That old chap with the big feet?" inquired Terence, craning his neck. "That's great-uncle O'Brannigan. He used to keep a rathskeller on the Bowery."

"I asked you to sit down, Terence. If you are not going to amuse, or obey, me, I shall report in the morning that I saw a ghost wearing an apron and carrying schooners of beer. Now, that is better. To be shy, at your age, Terence, is a thing that you should blush to acknowledge."

At breakfast on the last morning of her visit, Mrs. Bellmore startled

and entranced every one present by announcing positively that she had seen the ghost.

"Did it have a—a—a—?" Mrs. Kinsolving, in her suspense and agitation, could not bring out the word.

"No, indeed—far from it."

There was a chorus of questions from others at the table. "Weren't you frightened?" "What did it do?" "How did it look?" "How was it dressed?" "Did it say anything?" "Didn't you scream?"

"I'll try to answer everything at once," said Mrs. Bellmore, heroically, "although I'm frightfully hungry. Something awakened me—I'm not sure whether it was a noise or a touch—and there stood the phantom. I never burn a light at night, so the room was quite dark, but I saw it plainly. I wasn't dreaming. It was a tall man, all misty white from head to foot. It wore the full dress of the old, colonial days—powdered hair, baggy coat skirts, lace ruffles and a sword. It looked intangible and luminous in the dark, and moved without a sound. Yes, I was a little frightened at first—or startled, I should say. It was the first ghost I had ever seen. No, it didn't say anything. I didn't scream. I raised up on my elbow, and then it glided silently away, and disappeared when it reached the door."

Mrs. Kinsolving was in the seventh heaven. "The description is that of Captain Kinsolving, of General Greene's army, one of our ancestors," she said, in a voice that trembled with pride and relief. "I really think I must apologize for our ghostly relative, Mrs. Bellmore. I am afraid he must have badly disturbed your rest."

Terence sent a smile of pleased congratulation toward his mother. Attainment was Mrs. Kinsolving's, at last, and he loved to see her happy.

"I suppose I ought to be ashamed to confess," said Mrs. Bellmore, who was now enjoying her breakfast, "that I wasn't very much disturbed. I presume it would have been the

customary thing to scream and faint, and have all of you running about in picturesque costumes. But, after the first alarm was over, I really couldn't work myself up to a panic. The ghost retired from the stage quietly and peacefully, after doing its little turn, and I went to sleep again."

Nearly all who listened, politely accepted Mrs. Bellmore's story as a made-up affair, charitably offered as an offset to the unkind vision seen by Mrs. Fischer-Suymptoms. But one or two present perceived that her assertions bore the genuine stamp of her own convictions. Truth and candor seemed to attend upon every word. Even a scoffer at ghosts—if he were very observant—would have been forced to admit that she had, at least in a very vivid dream, been honestly aware of the weird visitor.

Soon, Mrs. Bellmore's maid was packing. In two hours, the auto would come to convey her to the station. As Terence was strolling upon the east piazza, Mrs. Bellmore came up to him, with a confidential sparkle in her eye.

"I didn't wish to tell the others all of it," she said, "but I will tell you. In a way, I think you should be held responsible. Can you guess in what manner that ghost awakened me last night?"

"Rattled chains," suggested Terence, after some thought, "or groaned? They usually do one or the other."

"Do you happen to know," continued Mrs. Bellmore, with sudden irrelevancy, "if I resemble any one of the female relatives of your restless ancestor, Captain Kinsolving?"

"Don't think so," said Terence, with an extremely puzzled air. "Never heard of any of them being noted beauties."

"Then, why," said Mrs. Bellmore, looking the young man gravely in the eye, "should that ghost have kissed me, as I'm sure it did?"

"Heavens!" exclaimed Terence, in wide-eyed amazement; "you don't

mean that, Mrs. Bellmore! Did he actually kiss you?"

"I said *it*," corrected Mrs. Bellmore. "I hope the impersonal pronoun is correctly used."

"But why did you say I was responsible?"

"Because you are the only living male relative of the ghost."

"I see. 'Unto the third and fourth generation.' But, seriously, did he—did it—how do you—?"

"Know? How does any one know? I was asleep, and that is what awakened me, I'm almost certain."

"Almost?"

"Well, I awoke just as—oh, can't you understand what I mean? When anything arouses you suddenly, you are not positive whether you dreamed, or—and yet you know that— Dear me, Terence, must I dissect the most elementary sensations in order to accommodate your extremely practical intelligence?"

"But, about kissing ghosts, you know," said Terence, humbly, "I require the most primary instruction. I never kissed a ghost. Is it—is it—?"

"The sensation," said Mrs. Bellmore, with deliberate, but slightly smiling, emphasis, "since you are seeking instruction, is a mingling of the material and the spiritual."

"Of course," said Terence, suddenly growing serious, "it was a dream or some kind of a hallucination. Nobody believes in spirits, these days. If you told the tale out of kindness of heart, Mrs. Bellmore, I can't express how grateful I am to you. It has made my mother supremely happy. That Revolutionary ancestor was a stunning idea."

Mrs. Bellmore sighed. "The usual fate of ghost-seers is mine," she said, resignedly. "My privileged encounter with a spirit is attributed to lobster salad or mendacity. Well, I have, at least, one memory left from the wreck—a kiss from the unseen world. Was Captain Kinsolving a very brave man, do you know, Terence?"

"He was licked at Yorktown, I believe," said Terence, reflecting. "They say he skedaddled with his company, after the first battle there."

"I thought he must have been timid," said Mrs. Bellmore, absently. "He might have had another."

"Another battle?" asked Terence, dully.

"What else could I mean? I must go and get ready now; the auto will be here in an hour. I've enjoyed Clifftop immensely. Such a lovely morning, isn't it, Terence?"

On her way to the station, Mrs. Bellmore took from her bag a silk handkerchief, and looked at it with a little, peculiar smile. Then she tied it in several very hard knots, and threw it, at a convenient moment, over the edge of the cliff along which the road ran.

In his room, Terence was giving some directions to his man, Brooks. "Have this stuff done up in a parcel,"

he said, "and ship it to the address on that card."

The card was that of a New York costumer. The "stuff" was a gentleman's costume of the days of '76, made of white satin, with silver buckles, white silk stockings and white kid shoes. A powdered wig and a sword completed the dress.

"And look about, Brooks," added Terence, a little anxiously, "for a silk handkerchief with my initials in one corner. I must have dropped it somewhere."

It was a month later when Mrs. Bellmore and one or two others of the smart crowd were making up a list of names for a coaching trip through the Catskills. Mrs. Bellmore looked over the list for a final censoring. The name of Terence Kinsolving was there. Mrs. Bellmore ran her prohibitive pencil lightly through the name.

"Too shy!" she murmured, sweetly, in explanation.



WILL SHE REMEMBER?

SHE will dance to-night in satin
With a prince for a vis-à-vis,
Whose name comes down from the Latin,
Who will woo her on bended knee.

Her eyes will shine like jewels,
Like the diamonds round her neck.
Ah, those eyes have cost two duels,
And the diamonds a royal cheque!

She will listen to song and laughter,
And to hints that she is divine,
That will cause her to blush long after
Like a glass of vermilion wine.

But, ah, will she remember,
As she floats in the waltzing whirl,
That dance with me, one December,
In the barn, when she was a girl?

TOM HALL.

AFTERMATH

THE reapers sing amid the ripened grain,
 While in the Autumn sun the sickles gleam,
 And far afield the silken poppies seem
 To spread their splendid scarlet all in vain;
 The harvest moon swings slowly up again,
 In majesty resplendent and supreme;
 Then, like the far, faint darkness of a dream,
 A purple twilight comes upon the plain.

Down in the stubble, silvery cobwebs shine,
 As if, in answer to September's kiss,
 A strange and ghostly beauty Earth should yield;
 And, if Death should divide thy love from mine,
 Upon my life must come a peace like this—
 The memory of the harvest on the field.

MYRTLE REED.



RUNNING THE GAMUT

FLIPPER—What made him lose faith in human nature?

FLAPPER—He bought an unbreakable comb, took a dose of tasteless cod-liver oil, and visited a painless dentist.



AMONG THE HILLS

HIGH-WOODED hollows, where serenely rest
 The lazy clouds, like giants in repose;
 Low sun that paints with purple and with rose
 A parting glory on the wood and stream,
 And one who follows with a long, long dream
 The brook that winds away into the West.

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE.



A STRONG SENTIMENT

SOME smell of onions, some achieve the smell of onions, while others have the smell of onions thrust upon them.

THE BRANDING OF CIRCE

By Helen Frances Huntington

"TOO much success spoils some men," Major Cleghorn remarked, sententiously; "I'm afraid Trevelyan's that sort."

"The gods are prejudiced in his favor, as everyone may see at a glance," Clement declared, sinking into the easy depth of a hammock opposite Cleghorn; "and they're plotting his downfall. It's too much for him—makes him lean all one way. He's young, handsome, and a hero with women; he has been successful where men twice his age have failed; and he has a wife who might be the envy of the station, if she felt so inclined, for she's beautiful and very clever, but prefers verse-making and the seclusion of her own walled garden to the frivolities of society; and for outings she contents herself with the company of her four-year-old son, who has unlimited talents for monopolizing everybody's attention. Meantime, Trevelyan is going it at a pretty stiff pace."

"Some woman in the lead?"

"Yes; little, white wraith of a widow, with big, mournful eyes and a smile that makes a fellow wish he could make the world over for her. Either she's wily as Eve, or she's an angel, pure and simple."

"We'll be on the safe side, and call her Eve," the Major suggested, drily.

"Anyhow, she's doing Trevelyan an ill turn, to get him talked about just now."

"I don't see but that Mrs. Trevelyan is altogether at fault," the older man said, almost irritably. "Such a woman should be able to keep the King himself, if she cared two straws. Why, in heaven's name, doesn't she burn her

poetry, and put an end to Trevelyan's foolishness! Seems to me one's about as much off as the other."

"You don't understand the case exactly," Clement went on, evenly, "or you wouldn't blame Mrs. Trevelyan for leaving her husband pretty much to his own devices, since they lead him into crowded pleasure places, where people flock to do honor to phenomenally successful men and titles. It should be remembered that Mrs. Trevelyan is a talented woman. She has, in a great measure, that gift of interpretation of nature which, for want of better language, we call instinct, presentiment, or some such inadequate name. India is the writer's paradise. If a man can write at home under thin northern skies, in the face of the anxious, delving multitude, and so interpret nature that the message will reach men's hearts, he has genius that in India would blossom like a desert garden. Do you know that, Cleghorn?"

"I know that you are a dreamer, Clement. I am one of the delving multitude," he answered, drily.

"Then you don't see things clearly enough to judge of Mrs. Trevelyan's case."

"I rather think she could be better employed by looking after her husband's welfare, however much talent she may have. She's capable of anything; she's simply superb. Such a woman should be able to overthrow an ordinary enemy at a single combat."

"Wait till you see the widow," Clement answered, quietly.

When the Trevelyan's appeared at the station, a year before, the young

major was welcomed with open arms, and his wife pronounced a very charming woman. They received numberless invitations, and, in return, entertained handsomely. But Mrs. Trevelyan was not so impressionable as society would have liked her to be; she had very decided ideas of her own, which did not run the whole gamut of station dicta. Moreover, she was new to India, and very greatly prejudiced in favor of everything native that had the flavor of romance and legendary lore. She carried her erratic race notions into practice by gathering under her roof household functionaries such as pleased her artistic eye, regardless of caste or condition, at which her wiser neighbors smiled and predicted unpleasant results. But nothing uncomfortable had come of it; on the contrary, Mrs. Trevelyan's household was particularly cheerful and satisfactory all around.

Chief among her servants was young Dicky's nurse, a girl of uncertain parentage, whom Mrs. Trevelyan had rescued from an evil fate. She was unusually beautiful, even for one of her race, remarkable for feminine loveliness; and Mrs. Trevelyan dressed her in wonderful native garments, all crimson and white and gold, which made her look like a Ranee. In return for all the kindness lavished upon her, Suráma became Mrs. Trevelyan's devoted slave, and took pains to learn the ways of the Sahibs, after the stately, graceful fashion of her kind.

Captain Trevelyan did not understand his wife's "peculiar tastes," which she knew, and wisely gave over trying to enlighten him, without withdrawing herself from his society. She accompanied him, as often as necessary, to scenes of his social conquests, and, when occasion demanded, gave herself up to the entertainment of his friends at her house; but she went her own serene gait, impervious to the gossip of the station. Her manifest superiority to petty affairs showed itself in her very evident dislike to the meaningless formalities of social distinctions, and gossip; therefore other women dis-

liked her and said spiteful things about her, after the manner of small souls the world over.

But her actual trouble began with the advent of Mrs. Eddyngham, who hailed from Simla, on a visit to old Mrs. Curly. A little whiff of scandal followed her ominously, but she cleverly turned the story to a point of fascinating mystery that enhanced the charm of her personality immensely. It was said, by those who knew, that her husband had gone to his death with eyes wide open and a steadfast purpose to put an end to his unhappiness—he was a man of unattainable ideals—but this rumor was not believed in the face of the little widow's almost mournful air of innocence, which, in due time, won over her most obstinate enemy. Yet, she managed to keep up a running fire of commentary about herself, knowing that it would culminate in her favor; and this came to pass. In a fortnight, she was securely established in the interests of the station; and, meantime, having sufficiently reconnoitred the fields of conquest, she singled out Trevelyan for her victim, and captured him with the audacious effrontery of studied naiveté.

He was a little difficult to handle at first, but she was very skilful in the art of feminine warfare; at the end of the first month, she had chained him up to the neck in her toils.

Then people talked. They said, among other things, that it served Mrs. Trevelyan right; but she paid no heed to the rumor—only, she wrote less, and devoted more time to her husband—not knowing that it was too late for such mild measures—for the poison had filtered into his very soul.

In the course of social functions, it became necessary for the wife to invite Mrs. Eddyngham to her house several times, which brought matters to a crisis. After Mrs. Trevelyan had borne, with stoical fortitude, all that any woman could bear, she made mention of the matter, so quietly that Trevelyan was frightened.

"I wish you would be more discreet, for Dicky's sake," she said, very calm-

ly. "I shouldn't like him to hear evil reports of you, when he's big enough to listen to such things."

"For Dicky's sake!" he echoed, drawing a deep breath of relief.

"And your own. Remember that you have a reputation to lose. Do not risk so much for a mere whim."

He found no words to express the thoughts that welled up from his guilty soul. How could he tell his wedded wife—as true a wife as ever drew breath—that he loved another woman!

"And yourself?" he asked, hopelessly, feeling that he must speak.

"I need not plead for myself," she answered, a note of scorn threading her clear voice. "If I have your love, no one shall ever take it from me; if it is not mine, what right have I to ask it? And there's nothing that I can do, is there, Gerald?" she said, softening suddenly to pathetic gentleness. "If I have been selfish in the pleasure of my work, forgive me. It has been a great joy to me always, and I thought——"

"You were right," he interrupted, with feverish haste. "Nothing gives me more pleasure than to know you are happy, Amie. I'd be a brute to ask you to drag about with me to all the tinsel shows and *jallah-hahs* I go to. I enjoy them just as you enjoy your verse-making and fairy tales; and you know that all that sort of thing is necessary, in a way, to my success."

The eager, strained look in his eyes belied his forced heartiness too plainly to deceive Amie, who read very deeply. Gerald was not a good liar—he was too spontaneous; only cold, deliberate natures are capable of indefectible lies; therefore, Amie knew that there was something serious amiss; but she did not fathom the full measure of his misery.

What more he said deserves no record, for it was simply the vain hope of a man who feels himself slipping over the brink, for want of strength to resist the evil powers that hold him. Suráma heard every word from her couch on the open balcony, and pondered their significance deeply. It was after that

night that she observed a change in her mistress and tried to discover its cause. It took some time and study to discern properly between the apparent antithesis of English ethics and the customs of the Sahibs, but she drew a tangible medium between the gentle dignity of Mrs. Trevelyan and Mrs. Eddyngham's subtle coquetry; and, when she became convinced the latter was accountable for her mistress's unhappiness, she hated her with the fervid hatred of Orientals, which is a thing to be evaded, if possible. So, she resolved to aid the gods in humbling her enemy.

"Why do they call the Memsahib Eddyngham beautiful?" she asked, during a pause in her play with the riotous Dicky. "She is *not* beautiful; how could she be? Not all the jewel-robos of the Maharajah's household could make her beautiful. She has pale eyes like a clouded sky, and her skin is white as skim milk."

"You do not understand," Mrs. Trevelyan answered, with a very cold little smile; "she is different from other women, perhaps it is her manner."

"Oh, her manner!" Suráma said, thoughtfully, folding her naked arms about her knees. "Of that I do not know; but I know that she is not beautiful, for I have seen many women of the Nizan's household to whom that poor, pale Memsahib would be as one's shadow when the moon is very young."

Mrs. Trevelyan would not have spoken of her rival to her English maids, any more than she would have tried to explain matters to Dicky; but she felt so sure that Suráma's curiosity was but the mild interest of a child in whom was no guile. The quaint reflections pleased the listener; she allowed the girl to speak out all her dreamy fantasies to her heart's content, never suspecting the deep thoughts that underlaid the soft smile and speech.

When Major Cleghorn appeared, suddenly, at Simla, Mrs. Eddyngham drew a stifled breath of amazement, and became very quiet. His behavior toward her was so manifestly scornful that gossip invented a story of a dis-

carded lover, which, in due time, circled around to Cleghorn, in a very much embellished edition. Then, he rose in his wrath, and this is what he said:

"Eddyngham was my friend, and for his sake I will not say how much evil this woman has wrought; but, if she tries to ruin another woman's life, as God lives, I will destroy her peace!"

Mrs. Eddyngham heard it, and trembled, and, for a few days, held herself strictly aloof from frivolities in which Trevelyan was concerned; but the evil spirit within conquered fear and caution so far as to make her play a very bold stroke at the Holman-Ridgely ball, which was a very brilliant affair indeed.

Among the uninvited guests present at the ball was Suráma, who walked about the shadowy gardens, scrutinizing everything to her own satisfaction, for the purpose of perfecting her own devices. She caught sight of Mrs. Eddyngham, and watched her with a slow, beautiful smile that would have made the other woman a trifle uneasy had she seen it. She pitted the rivals against each other, as so many people did that night, and vowed a strange, eerie vow by the whole pantheon of her people's gods.

Mrs. Eddyngham wore a diaphanous white gown, caught at the throat by a diamond sunburst, and carried a huge, white feather fan with frosted pearl edges, surcharged with heavy rose perfume that waved about her with every motion of the jeweled plaything. Mrs. Trevelyan was gowned in a wholly indescribable creation in amber-colored stuff, which enveloped her like a luminous haze of light, deepening the brilliant flush on her cheeks, the only sign by which the world might guess the secret of her unresting heart-ache.

When the first dance was over, and the dancers sought the cooler air, Suráma left her post of observation to conceal herself in the dense shadow of the garden greenery; and, after a long while, Mrs. Eddyngham appeared on the balcony, and passed with her com-

panion into the garden, to the fragrant shadow of the *campaks*, so close to Suráma that she could hear every word spoken.

"It is not true," Trevelyan was saying, with a wholesome thrill of scorn. "Let them say what they will of me—I deserve their blame, God knows!—but not a word of her. She was always too good for me. Our marriage was simply a mistake on both sides—a huge, terrible jest of fate to bind us together for life. If she were like most women, it would not matter so much—it would be different, at least."

"Why go over all that again?" Mrs. Eddyngham asked, in a languid undertone.

"You ask me that!" he answered, with a laugh that was not good to hear. "To exonerate myself, perhaps. And why——?"

"Because I love you, the most beautiful, the coldest woman on earth! I love you, while *she* should be first—you know that she is not—and you force me to say it over and over, when you should forbid me to speak of it—you should hate me for it."

"And, if I hated you, would that change your love?"

"No, nothing could do that. Such love as mine for you is a curse, an unspeakable curse to both of us. It cannot give us happiness, but even its pain is sweet, Doris; fate is stronger than we. I have given everything for one word of love from you, even truth and honor—but honor will be avenged. And yet——"

"And yet you love me," she murmured, with a tremulous little smile.

"I love you! I love you! Do not make me say it again, or I will pray for the hour when I can say I hate you!" he answered, passionately.

She broke into a mirthless laugh that echoed hollowly through the sweet silence of the night, but, before she could answer, a man's voice called to Trevelyan from the balcony.

"I'll wait for you," she whispered, for she recognized Cleghorn's voice, and feared to meet him in Trevelyan's presence. She drew back into the

shadow, so close to Suráma that she could have touched her shoulder, when a tall, slender, yellow-clad figure rounded the curve of the garden path, and the radiant flood of moonlight revealed Mrs. Trevelyan's ghastly pale face. Mrs. Eddyngham shrank back in sudden alarm, but recovered herself with admirable presence of mind.

"Don't let me frighten you," Mrs. Trevelyan said, in a perfectly even voice, that cut the silence like a knife blade. "You are perfectly safe, you know."

"I suppose you expect me to say something," the other began, unfurling her perfume-laden fan, and waving it slowly between her and the light. She had a very small hope that Mrs. Trevelyan might not have overheard her conversation with the husband, and she tried to feel her way to discovering how much the wife suspected.

"No," Mrs. Trevelyan answered, "it can make no possible difference what you say or do—do not trouble yourself to invent an explanation."

"You are insulting," the other began, with an admirable show of offended dignity. "There is no cause for an explanation, as you say. If you have been eavesdropping and heard too much or too little, it doesn't concern me to rectify your mistakes. I am not a meddler with other people's affairs, at least."

"Oh, no, you are less than that," Mrs. Trevelyan said, throwing back her dark head with the ghost of a smile that cut the other woman to the quick; "you are simply a tool of destiny—the means to an end. In this case you have taught a man a lesson that most men must learn before they wake to a full realization of normal existence. The issue of the lesson is not yours to decide. When you have served your purpose, it will not matter in the least what becomes of you—I neither love nor hate you for this thing, any more than I love or hate the surgeon's tool which relieves a painful fester, or extracts a bad tooth. Both are necessary evils, you know."

Suráma did not wholly understand

the import of that speech, nor Mrs. Eddyngham's inadequate answer; but she caught the overwhelming contempt of the tone, and knew that the other woman's voice broke helplessly and sank to a choking sob of impotent anger.

"Beautiful, beautiful!" she murmured in a little scornful whisper, looking after them as they disappeared in the twinkling shade of the greenery. "How little they know of beauty, these strange Sahibs! But the Memsahib, that evil thing, has spread about some delusion that blinds men's eyes, and makes them mad, that they cannot see or discern between good and evil. But there is a cure for such as she." Then, with a strange revulsion of emotion, she threw herself face downward on the soft, fragrant grass, and wept heart-brokenly for the sorrow of her beloved friend.

Very early the next morning, Suráma made her way swiftly over the long road leading hillward; through deep, dark forests where natives go in search of herbs and strange potions, unknown to white men. There, in the heart of the silence, out of sight of profane, curious eyes, is an old ruined temple with open courts, where wandering hillmen sometimes rest on their way from province to province. In the temple are numbers of strange gods ranged about in sculptured niches, with horrible painted faces and eyeless sockets staring down into the mellow, golden-brown gloom, where snakes and creeping things glide in and out unmolested. Suráma paused beneath the temple dome, in worshipful silence. Presently, a stout, brown Bhil-woman emerged from the hill-trail, carrying a small, naked youngster astride her hip.

Suráma hailed her gravely. "Peace, sister," she said; "I have a charge for you; will you fulfil it for me—you and my brother, your husband?"

"We are very poor," the woman answered, stolidly.

"Yes, and I am rich," Suráma answered, displaying the easy earnings of ten months past, and a gold *mohur*, the birthday gift of Mrs. Trevelyan.

"For all this will you do what I shall ask of you, and just as I wish it?"

"As well as may be," the woman answered, eying the gold greedily.

"Listen, then. In the English tents below," with a sweeping curve of her hand toward the valley, "is a woman whom the gods love for her spotless truth and goodness, the mother of a little son who will one day rule our people; and it is given me to punish her enemy, who is a woman of lying tongue and idle vanity. On the second morning from this, when she rides over the hill, do you wait below in the woods, and, when I call you, come quickly."

"Is that all?"

"No. Let me see your hand; that"—pointing to a dark blue tracery under the lustrous skin—"is the work of your husband, is it not so?"

"Yes, but I can do even better," she answered, with childish pride.

"He has taught you?"

"Yes; but it is not much to learn, when one knows the secret of the dye."

"I do not ask to know the secret, but I wish you to do work like that—deeply, darkly, so that neither time nor cunning can efface it. Then will I give you this gold and more."

She promised, and Suráma thanked the gods, and went her way.

On the second morning, when Mrs. Eddyngham went over the hills for a canter, she rode a very uncertain mount, for her own horse had suddenly gone lame in the night, but her *sayce* followed closely, in case of accident. When they were well out of town, past the wooded ridge that shut off communication with her kind, the horse took fright at a flying arrow apparently shot out of the open space before them. It struck him low in the chest, but Mrs. Eddyngham did not see it, for she had hard work to keep her saddle during the animal's frantic rearing; she was a good horse-woman, however, and kept her seat until the frightened beast plunged into the thicket, where the overhanging branches forced her violently backward, and darkness closed about her.

After a very long interval of uncon-

sciousness, she awoke, and found herself lying on a couch of freshly pulled grass, in a ruinous old temple, with an array of hideous little native gods gazing down at her in fierce amazement. A tall, veiled woman's figure was silhouetted against the luminous glow of evening sunlight, that filtered through the open archway. A stout, scantily clad native woman sat cross-legged beside a little heap of smoldering incense, that sent up languid rings of perfumed smoke. Mrs. Eddyngham tried to rise, but she felt herself too weak; her body ached dully from head to foot, and she sank back, with an involuntary moan of pain.

The woman in the doorway turned and went forward, languidly.

"Where am I, and why am I here?" Mrs. Eddyngham asked, weakly, gazing into the beautiful, inscrutable eyes that looked out through the parted veil. "Let me go home."

"Yes, presently," the woman answered, and Mrs. Eddyngham wondered vaguely at the perfect, liquid English. "You are weak, sick, perhaps," she added, solicitously, "but it is only from fright—you fell from your horse, you know. You were not hurt, only shocked, and your mount is here, waiting your pleasure."

She turned to the older woman, and spoke a few words in her native tongue, and the woman immediately prepared a fragrant drink of herbs and water, which she offered Mrs. Eddyngham with a gesture of gentle command.

Mrs. Eddyngham took the cup in one trembling hand, and raised the other to her burning face, but the veiled woman stayed it, gently.

"Don't," she said, briefly.

"What is it? Am I hurt?" Mrs. Eddyngham cried out, in sudden alarm.

"Drink that first, and you shall see."

She drained the potion, submissively, with those dark, unfathomable eyes fixed on her face.

"Now you will let me go home, will you not? Why, it is evening—growing late! I must have been here a very long while. How shall I find my way home?"

"If you are from the English tents toward Poona, the way home is straight before you—a child could not miss it. Are you ready? Perhaps you wish to confine your hair."

She held before the other a little, silver-framed mirror; and the sight that met Mrs. Eddyngham's eyes dazed and bewildered her, for the pictured face was strikingly like her own, but for horrible, deep blue lines sunk in the tender, white flesh across forehead and cheeks. The heavy, blue-gray eyes filled her with terror; she shivered and pushed the girl's hand aside.

"Take it away," she entreated, faintly. The parted, pallid lips of the poor, branded face moved also and repeated her speech, word for word.

"My God!" she shrieked, in sudden terror, "that is my face—it is I! Oh, no; it cannot be! What am I saying?" She laughed a horrible, maddened laugh, and, snatching the mirror from the girl's languid grasp, looked once more at the awful mutilated face, that neither time nor skill could ever cure. Then, with a wild scream, she flung the glass out among the mocking gods, where it crashed to a thousand fragments on the stone floor. The native woman dropped to her knees with a smothered cry, and began gathering up the bits of glass in cautious hands. Mrs. Eddyngham staggered to her knees, and caught the girl's slim wrists in her frenzied grasp, forcing her down beside her.

"Tell me, who has done this fiendish thing?" she cried. "You *shall* tell me, or I will kill you, do you hear? I tell you I *will* know!"

The girl freed herself, and rose with inimitable grace. "That the gods have allowed it is sufficient knowledge for you," she answered, coldly.

"The gods!" Mrs. Eddyngham cried. "Oh, you would lie to me, but, I tell you, I *will* know the truth. And I will be revenged on the fiend so that he shall never know a peaceful day as long as he lives. Oh, my God,

what have I done to deserve this? Oh, if they had but killed me! To be branded for life, worse than any thief or murderer!" She buried her poor, scarred face in her hands, and fell to weeping wildly, while Suráma looked on in unmoved silence. Suddenly, she flung out her arms, and rose, pushing back her long, loosened braids of yellow hair and the little babyish ringlets framing the forehead, once white and blue-veined and delicate as a child's, then staggered through the open court, into the calm of early evening. She flung herself into the saddle, and galloped away through the waning sunset; and the veiled girl watched her, with a slowly-dawning, cruel smile.

"She will nevermore drive men mad," she murmured, triumphantly, "and the Memsahib will have peace."

When the wretched woman was still far from the station, she saw a horseman ride out of the golden-brown mists over the swell of the hill, and, as he approached at a swinging canter, she recognized Cleghorn. But the light shone in his face so that he did not see her, until she was close beside him; then, at the sight of her ghastly face, he cried out in horrified amazement.

"Yes, look!" she cried, wildly, drawing rein and leaning forward in her saddle, with the awful laugh of a madwoman. "Look at your work; are you satisfied? Are you not proud of the wreck you have wrought? Nothing on earth or in hell could be worse, you fiend!"

He leaned back involuntarily, but she caught his horse's bridle with a grip of iron. "You *shall* look, you hound!" she said, between clenched teeth. "You thought to brand me in the eyes of the whole world, to destroy my peace, and you have succeeded, absolutely. But you shall not escape. Oh, no; I will live to make you suffer for this—suffer!"

"Are you mad?" he found voice to say, at last. "In God's name, what has happened to you?"

"The worst that could happen in

this world or the next," she gasped, with quivering lips—"and for what? You have avenged the woman who is your friend, and the man whose name I bear—the poor weakling who went to his death because I did not worship him! My God, if I could die! But I am afraid. That other woman could die and end her trouble; and the man died also and forgot. But I—why am I afraid? No hell could be worse than this! But I will live to repay you. It will take time to invent a punishment equal to mine; but never fear—I will accomplish it! It shall be the one aim of my ruined life now, for this world is dead to me, forever. Do you know what that means? No; but you shall know—and worse!"

She loosed her hold on his horse's bridle, with a stifled sob; her abject misery transmuted Cleghorn's resentment to profoundest pity; but, before he could shape his thoughts into words, she had ridden off furiously, like the madwoman she was.

Cleghorn looked after her, till a cloud of dust veiled the flying, hatless figure from sight; then he turned and rode slowly hillward, through the long, delicious current of mountain air.

"Her account is squared, just God!" he murmured.

"The beautiful Memsahib Eddyngham has left the station," Suráma remarked, on the following day, in the pause of her play with Dicky.

The name pierced Mrs. Trevel-

yan's reverie, painfully; she looked over at the unconscious girl, whose averted eyes followed Dick's movements, languidly. "How do you know?" she asked.

"Oh, I hear things. She has gone away, never to return. No, never," she added, almost smothering the laughing child in a wild caress, as he tumbled into her waiting arms.

"Why did she go?" Mrs. Trevelyan allowed herself to ask, in the face of her better judgment.

"How should I know? Ah, little vender of sweets, call me not so loudly, lest the gods be vexed at thy noise. Run quickly to the door, and see if they lurk not near."

As the child ran away, obediently, Suráma turned to her mistress with a swift, radiant smile. "The gods have punished the Memsahib for some evil thing of which they knew best, and, therefore, to hide her reproach, she has gone away forever. Oh, dear Sahiba, the gods are very wise and terrible!"

But the gods were also kind. It came about, through their intervention, that Captain Trevelyan went away to the wars, and, when the pain and fire of battle had burned the poison out of his soul, they brought him back, weak but victorious, to the woman who loved him purely and deserved his love; and life and happiness went hand in hand once more.

Suráma did not forget to offer oblation to the gods.



THE POOL

FATHOMLESS, opaque, hid in the marsh of years,
Lies the still pool of memory;
A fiddled tune, a bird's home cry, a woman's tears,
Imagined odors of the sea—
Strange how such as these trouble the water's breast,
And stir old pain, old joy, to fitful, faint unrest!

EMERY POTTLE.

"HOW COULD HE?"

"THE cut direct, did you say?"
"Have you heard nothing?"
"So much that it amounts to nothing."
"The ear of exit is as bad as another tongue."
"But the end is not yet."
"No, you haven't begun."
"They were to have come up together—but he was late."
"How could he?"
"Oh, overslept or something! His guardian angel must have been playing ping-pong. And it was his chance——"
"She didn't like it?"
"Inversely as she liked him."
"But he caught the next?"
"Yes. She didn't like that, either."
"How did she know?"
"She was there. She'd missed hers."
"So they came up together, after all?"
"Together—in adjacent Pullman chairs."
"Why, wasn't she nice to him?"
"Oh, *nice!* nice with a difference, you know."
"Did *he* know?"
"How could he?"
"But where did the Pine Lodge people come in?"
"Oh, you mean."
"Well—aboard?"
"While he was proposing!"
"Well, *go on!*"
"It was an awkward moment. He headed them off. But—it may have been her white flowers, or her pale, gray gown, or something they had heard—or all these— They congratulated him!"
"And he didn't deny it?"
"How could he? She hadn't refused him *yet*. She wouldn't have, if——"
"But it seemed like a honeymoon to the Pine Lodgers——"
"It didn't to him."
"But, in town, everybody heard it so."
"Next time they met, she cut him dead."
"And he doesn't understand?"
"How could he?"

A. R. M.



AND PREFERABLY BUMPTIOUS

HEWITT—A man must have a head to do business with me.
JEWETT—What is your business?
"I'm a phrenologist."

A VAGRANT

LAST night I missed a kiss—ah, me!
 I wonder where it is to-day—
 If some one came with lesser claim,
 And bore it safe away;

Or, somewhere 'twixt your heart and mine,
 It wanders very sad and lone,
 A little thing, past comforting,
 Still seeking for its own;

Lost on the road of Dreams Undone,
 That signless, dusty road and vain;
 The joys that fare bewildered there
 Come never back again.

You smile because I sigh, sweetheart,
 And yet, who knows, we two some day
 May yearn to go and claim it so,
 Where little lost joys stray.

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



MRS. HATTERSON—Didn't that earthquake wake you up last night?
 MRS. CATTERSON—Why, yes; but I didn't pay much attention to it. I
 thought it was my husband coming home from the club.



AT DAWN

AH, sweet, I slept and dreamed you mine, and missed
 One transient hour the old heart-hungriness;
 Bent my whole being to your soft caress,
 Drank with my sight your eyes' deep amethyst;
 The lips my own had waited for, I kissed,
 And touched the sunshine of each fragrant tress;
 So, while the golden moment stayed to bless,
 Deep in the heart of dreams we kept our tryst.

Ah, sweet, I woke, and knew that all the world,
 And all God's wonders of eternity,
 With dark, unyielding barriers, parted us;
 And saw afar, where sunrise flags unfurled,
 In the broad glare of day's reality,
 A lone star, dying, lovely, tremulous.

NANNIE BYRD TURNER.

OVERHEARD AT A STUDIO TEA

By Grace Florence Reed

THE tall, mannish girl in the tailor-made gown, sitting cross-legged on a Chippendale chair, was assuredly out of her element in the esthetic assembly which was in session, on a certain late April afternoon, at the studio of Leon Follette. Though coming, socially speaking, in the common class of teas, the affair was really a much more important function, for on this occasion the last essay of the artist, an intense piece of realism named "A November Noon-tide," was unveiled to the passionless gaze of the general public. Therefore, all the art world had turned out to see, and the critics were there twenty strong.

Said one of these, "The sky is too gray," said another, "The meads are too brown," said another, "Too much shadow," said another, "Too much sea," said another, in a furtive whisper, "Bad brushwork," and still another spoke, stealthily, the damning word, "Amateurish." As for the guests, who were pretty nearly of an ilk, they congregated in select groups, or sat around in circles, and enlarged their mental perspectives, and thanked their lucky stars that they were not as other folk, narrow-minded, which last among art people has all the force and meaning of the word "imbecile" as used by the ordinary run.

But the tailor-made girl happened to be neither critic nor connoisseur, or demi-savant, or dilettante; she was there because she was in society and it was the thing to do, and certainly she did not wish to be out of the fashion, which is about the same as being out of the world. So, she had braved

the freaks, and gone. Really, though, she had had a dreadful time. At the door, she had been nearly overwhelmed by the "Impressionists" gathered there, who compelled her to listen to a great deal of dreary stuff concerning one Monet, a person of whom she had never before heard; she escaped their clutches, to be brought to a standstill, a moment later, by an enthusiastic Beardsley group, through which she squeezed, only to fall instantly into the hands of the Pre-raphaelites, who closed in upon her at once. "Did she not think that the mantle of Botticelli—?" There had been a half-dozen of such encounters, ere the tailor-made girl had succeeded in getting to a good-sized clearing, upon which tea paraphernalia had been deposited. Here she gave a deep sigh of relief, and sank heavily into the first available chair, and immediately a young page, resplendent in purple and silver, a part of him clothes but most of him collar, hove down upon her, and served her willy-nilly with fragrant souchong and sandwiches and delicate French cakes.

Anon, there came airily down the long room a small, sylph-like creature, tousle-haired, dreamy-eyed, and utterly startling in a most remarkable creation of vermilion velvet, trimmed with yards and yards of black passementerie. She had but just now floated away from a very serious crowd of Ibsenites, where she had had a difference with a man who rather patronized her. He was a degenerate, of course, but, oh, soul of Nordau, nice! At the neighboring rustle, the tailor-

made girl aroused herself, and looked around.

"Why, hello!" said she, good-naturedly, if a trifle superiorly, "I haven't seen you in a dog's age; you weren't at the Wyldes' last Sunday."

The truth of the matter was that the tailor-made girl had become bored enough to be glad of a chance of being amused by almost anybody. She had even had a thought of beckoning to a sentimental stripling, who stood rapturously gazing into the wanton eyes of a nude Venus on the wall opposite, but, happily, that had been spared her.

Miss Vermilion settled herself indolently among the cushions of a Turkish divan, and hailed a passing page. "No," said she, languidly, "no, I wasn't at the Wyldes'"—to the page: "Lemon and sugar and a sardine sandwich; yes, and olives—I went up the river Saturday night, to spend Sunday with Aspasia Smythe."

"Why, have the Smythes moved out of Jersey?" asked the tailor-made girl, proceeding to brush some cake crumbs from her lap to the floor.

"Then you haven't heard?" Miss Vermilion sat up quite straight.

"Heard what?"

"Why, the Smythes have separated, and Aspasia has gone home to her mother. Didn't you know about it?"

"Mercy, no! Why, I thought they were such a devoted couple. Wasn't it supposed to have been a love match?"

"So it was said at the time, though I don't mind telling you that I never believed he was her affinity. As things have turned out, of course, he couldn't have been. It wasn't a marriage at all, in the true sense of the word. Their souls were never one."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said the tailor-made girl; "they were in love with each other when they were married, weren't they?"

"Possibly, in a purely commonplace way," said Miss Vermilion; "Aspasia is too unordinary a girl to have ever really cared for a man who was not her affinity."

"Then, why did she marry him?" demanded the tailor-made girl; "he

was rich, of course, but I suppose such an unordinary girl would not have cared about that."

"Well," said Miss Vermilion, slowly, conveying a bit of sandwich to her rather pensive mouth, "I'll tell you what I think about it. Since I have visited Aspasia at her mother's, and seen the horribly unesthetic way they live, I am convinced that marriage with her was merely a matter of expediency. I always knew that her people were vulgar and all that, but I had no idea that they were as utterly impossible as they are. They are in rather moderate circumstances, which, of course, is no excuse for their lack of refinement, and they have absolutely no sympathy with the aims and aspirations of the Ideal Life. They do not even believe in the Higher Culture. Aspasia's father told me himself that the colleges were turning out more candidates for public charity than public charity could well look after, and that the best thing a poor man could do for his sons, unless they showed signs of unusual ability in some one direction, was to give them a practical education in the rudimentary branches, and then set them at a good trade. That's what he has done with his sons. One of Aspasia's brothers is a plumber, and one is a carpenter, and the third, who is rather delicate, actually runs a farm, a country farm. Aspasia was the only girl, and she insisted upon going to Wellesley. Her father made an awful fuss about it, but she got her mother on her side, and then he had to give in. At first, she thought she would like to have a chair in some university. She looked perfectly lovely in a cap and gown—but she always got muddled over mathematics, and, finally, one night while she was worrying over examinations, in a sudden illuminating inspiration it came to her that she was an artist. She wrote her father to that effect next day, saying that she was determined to devote her life henceforth to the study of art. And what do you suppose the brute wrote her in answer? He said that artists, the whole lot,

were a pack of fools, and more deserved to die in the poorhouse than did, and that, if she had got any such idea in her head, she could pack up her duds and make tracks for home, and he would see if he couldn't knock a little common sense into her. You can imagine what that poor girl went through. That's the unpleasant part of having the artistic temperament; you suffer so intensely. Aspasia says that for three days and three nights the most terrific of struggles was going on inside of her—the Ideal and the starvation of body, against the Commonplace and the starvation of soul. Of course, the Ideal won. She borrowed some money, and came to New York, where she had a few friends, and speedily made others, myself among the number; you know she's the most fascinating creature alive; she used to say that she could charm everybody but her parents. She lived in a hall bedroom in Bank street, and did her own cooking, and made enough money, by addressing envelopes for a patent-medicine firm, and doing copying for a lawyer in the house, to pay her room rent, and buy her crackers and cheese and chocolate—what she lived on, mostly. Everything went very well for a while, but pretty soon her clothes began to get seedy, and how was she going to get more? Some of us clubbed together and got her an Easter hat, but her one good gown was almost threadbare, and she was simply destitute of underwear. Then it got to be Summer, and there she was without a shirt-waist to bless herself with. To crown all, the patent-medicine firm went bankrupt, and then Aspasia was compelled to write to her father and beg him for a loan sufficient to set her on her feet again. He wrote her to come home at once, enclosing a cheque for her car-fare, and saying that he hoped her experience had taught her a lesson which she would not soon forget. Aspasia was stung to the quick. 'Go home!' said she; 'never! Why, in three months I should be an imbecile.' At the time, we all thought her prejudiced against her people, but,

since I have visited them, I understand just how she felt. You see, Aspasia has always been thoroughly esthetic; she has told me that, as a child, she suffered the most excruciating tortures from having to wear a terracotta dress trimmed with old rose. A woman who would inflict such an outrageous combination on her child must be positively depraved. Aspasia says she is firmly convinced that her mother has no soul, and, really, it does not seem as though any one who had the divine spark in her could tolerate such a demoralizing influence as Aspasia's mother's parlor is. Aspasia always contends that art and morals are so closely allied that they cannot be divorced without disastrous results, and she says to be compelled to sit in a room where there is a carpet of a set pattern in decided colors, and angular furniture, and a coal stove with a metal ornament on the top, and a marble-topped table with some wax lilies-of-the-valley under a glass on it, and a crocheted lambrequin, and patchwork sofa cushions, and tidies on the chairs, and a 'Rock of Ages,' and a 'Washington Crossing the Delaware' on the wall, is enough to make a hardened criminal of almost any one."

"You started out to tell me how the Smythes came to separate, didn't you?" observed the tailor-made girl, indifferently.

"I am coming to that," said Miss Vermilion, sweetly. "I haven't told you about their getting married yet. It was just when Aspasia was at the most embarrassing point of her financial situation that Mr. Smythe, who had been paying her attention all Winter, proposed. We thought, at the time, that Aspasia accepted him simply because she was in love with him, but now that I realize how utterly impossible it was for her to live with her parents in the vitiated atmosphere that seems to hang around them, I feel convinced that Tom Smythe was the only possible solution of a problem which had grown intolerable."

"Likely enough," said the tailor-made girl, yawning; "but I can't for

the life of me see what all this has to do with Aspasia Smythe's leaving her husband. I wish, my dear Angela, you'd take a tumble to your story, if you're ever going to. I'm due at the Mauves' at six, and it's after five now."

"I see you are suffering from what Aspasia calls acute *nervitis*," said Miss Vermilion, sympathetically; "you should go in for mental discipline; govern your thinking, as the Christian Scientists say. What really was at the bottom of the Smythe affair was the tower-room in the top of their house in Jersey. Aspasia did not know what to do with it, so she put a lot of old things in it, and Mr. Smythe got in the habit of going there to smoke after dinner. You know Aspasia can't endure the smell of tobacco. She says it irritates her all over. She is such a sensitive little thing! Last Winter, Aspasia came into town for the lectures on the Vedanta philosophy, given by that queer something with the funny name—you must remember how gone Alida de Belleville was over him—and she was converted almost right away. She was a Theosophist before, but, as she said, the Vedanta philosophy is so much more definite. She was perfectly carried away by her new belief—she is so enthusiastic over anything she is interested in! She used to sit for hours in the most painful position, her whole mind concentrated upon the tip of her nose; she said it was wonderful what splendid ideas came to her when she did that. Then, too, she made a regular practice of breathing. She says that what the run of people call breathing isn't that at all. The way to do it properly is to shut your mouth and close one nostril, and breathe in all the while, thinking about your nerve currents; then shut the other nostril and breathe out."

"Tommy-rot!" interrupted the tailor-made girl; "how can you breathe at all with your nose and mouth shut?"

"I was just going to say," resumed Miss Vermilion, "that when you shut one nostril you opened the other one.

If you do that often enough, in time you will get to be a yogi. That's what Aspasia wants to be."

"I fancy she will be quite full-fledged by the time you finish telling me how she happened to leave her husband," murmured the tailor-made girl, *sotto voce*.

"Doing all those yogyish things," Miss Vermilion went on, "naturally imbued Aspasia with the ethereal atmosphere of the Orient. One day, she said to me, with the saddest little smile, 'Do you know, dear, since I have embraced the Vedanta philosophy, I want to Brahmanize everything? Why, here in my own house, I feel like the veriest stranger—you know their house was entirely Hellenic, Aspasia is such an out-and-out Greek. I suggested that they have a room fitted up in India style. 'The very thing,' said she; 'but we already have more furniture than we know what to do with, and I can't ask Tom to build an addition to the house. I haven't even spoken to him about my feelings, because I am sure he would only laugh at me.' Husbands are so unsympathetic! Suddenly, I had an inspiration. 'The tower-room!' I cried. Really, nothing could have been more delightful. We talked the matter over seriously as soon as we were sufficiently tranquilized, and we hit upon what seemed to us the most felicitous idea imaginable. Mr. Smythe would have a birthday in a few weeks, and we proposed transforming the tower-room into a regular little Indian den for him. The next day, Aspasia came to the city, and we had a fine time rummaging around in foreigny shops for rugs and things. Aspasia had brought her sketch-book, and in one funny little bohemian hole, while I was interviewing the man who kept it—such an odd, Rembrandtesque figure he was—she drew him. We were deciding what we wanted, when it suddenly occurred to us that we hadn't thought anything about remunerating these people for the things we took. Aspasia didn't quite know what to do; she had only just enough money in her purse

to pay her car-fare home—we had done some shopping—and we were positive they would never let us have those things unless we said something about paying for them; shopkeepers are so particular about settlements! It did not seem exactly right to have Mr. Smythe pay for his own birthday present, but, finally, Aspasia decided to have the bill sent in to him, and then she would pay him back little by little, until the account was squared. 'I'm sure,' she said, 'I can save a lot out of the money Tom allows me for the table.' You know one can always economize on inconsequential things; Aspasia is a regular business woman, and she began right away to cut down the dinner menu, having less variety and less of it. Besides, she hunted around and found places where meats and vegetables could be bought at very much reduced rates. I have thought, though, since this terrible affair, that it would have been better if we had found out how much everything added up would come to, before making any definite arrangements. Aspasia was sure that fifty dollars would cover everything, but I must say that I had my doubts as to that, all along. Of course, the antiques were second-hand, but we might have known that the rugs would be expensive. The night before Mr. Smythe's birthday, I went to Orange, and next morning, as soon as he had gone, we set to work, and with the help of a scrub-woman and a couple of paper-hangers, we succeeded in getting everything in order by six o'clock. When we were quite finished and had time to look around, the result more than fulfilled our expectations. The carpet, my dear, was the most absolutely lovely creation you ever saw; the prevailing tint was one of those gorgeous, dull purples which, Aspasia says, are as good as a nerve for her when she has neuralgia. As for the rugs, I simply couldn't begin to describe them; there were heaps and heaps of them, all thoroughly esthetic in design. The paper was more beautiful than anything else; the background

was a mysterious, almost a sinister, shade of red, and the figures, which were of Moorish pattern, were shot through and through with a very deep yellowish drab. Of course, there were no chairs in the room, but we had two bamboo couches and an immense, rug-covered divan, piled up with quantities of scented pillows in deliciously covered Persian stuffs, and some little ottomans and praying-mats, if one preferred to sit on the floor *à la Turc*. Then there were teapots, and a punkah, and a screen made out of whatever the natives of the East Indies thatch their roofs with, and six large bronze lamps suspended from the ceiling in chains, and a large lacquered jar to burn incense in, and a big rose bowl of carved sandalwood, and a great stone water-jug, and some beautiful inlaid vases, and any amount of Indian pottery, and two nargilehs and a hookah. We had taken the door off, and hung heavy portières, and the window curtains were of the same material, a rich velvety tapestry. Then we had a drapery of soft-toned black arranged in a jog of the tower, and behind was a sort of shrine with a three-headed god in it. I'm sure I did know what his name was. Aspasia had got an Oriental smoking-gown for Mr. Smythe. It had a loose yellow satin blouse covered with large gilt spangles, and a scarlet velvet jacket with a lot of gold lace in the neck, falling down the front in a sort of jabot, and very full yellow satin trousers spangled like the blouse in stars and crescents. There were yellow satin slippers, coming to a sharp point and turning over at the toes, and the cutest little fez of red velvet, with a yellow cord and tassel. The whole thing was like a picture from the Arabian Nights. We had just lighted the lamps and got the incense burning, when we heard Mr. Smythe coming in. We ran down to meet him, and Aspasia kissed him, and said: 'My love, go up to the tower-room, and see the birthday surprise I have for you.' We waited in the hall, thinking it would be more delicate to

leave him to himself, but presently we heard a loud crash, followed by a dull thud, and we rushed up, to find him just struggling to his feet. It seems that, when he pushed the curtains aside, the incense came out in perfect clouds, and the room was so thick with smoke that he couldn't see where he was going, and he ran right into one of those big lamps, and gave his head an awful crack; and, before he could pull himself together, he stumbled over one of the nargilehs, and fell flat on the floor. Of course, it was an unpleasant accident, but can you see how Aspasia could be blamed for it? As soon as he had recovered his breath, she took him around and showed him everything, and explained about the poor fare they had been having, and then, naturally enough, we waited for his expressions of delight. This is what we got, and I give you my word we did not have to wait very long for it: 'What in the devil is the matter with you? Gone clean crazy? Lost the little wit you had? By George, if you have, I feel sorry for you! Do you suppose I am going to wear any such blamed tomfoolery as this heathenish rig? I'd as lief be seen in my pajamas. Oh, yes, I have a vision of myself sitting on one of those three-legged stools, togged in yellow bloomers with stars and half-moons splattered all over them, a kid's cap stuck on the top of my bald head, and six inches of metal hose in my mouth. I can just see myself puffing away at that old cooking stove over there. It's a wonder to me that you didn't turn a menagerie loose in here, to make things more realistic. A couple of tiger cubs, now, and a hippopotamus or two, would give just the right local color to the scene. My dear wife, if I started out to make a fool of myself, I wouldn't let a little thing like a hippopotamus stand in

my way. What do you suppose your folderol amounts to? Five hundred and fifty dollars. So, you've been keeping me on the verge of starvation for the last three weeks to help pay for these devilish fire-engines, eh? Well, I've put up with your blamed estheticism for two years now, but I'll be hanged if I'll do it any longer! If you are so dead set on being Oriental, I'll set up a harem, and see how you like that.'

"Now," said Miss Vermilion, triumphantly, "now, do you wonder that Aspasia wouldn't live with him, after that? As she says, if he had turned out to be a gambler or a drunkard, she might have tried to make the best of it; but to have him show himself so hopelessly, so contemptibly, so outrageously vulgar, was more than she could endure. I don't believe she will ever recover from the terrible ordeal she has passed through. She is the exact counterpart of the wild white wraith in Morosi's 'Midnight Grave.' Oh, such haunting eyes as she turned to me, when I went in to see her last Saturday! She lies on a couch with her face buried in violets, most of the time. All the while I was there, she seemed like one in a dream, and she says that she feels that she is gradually losing her hold of earth. I had hoped that she would be able to come to town in the Autumn, and open a studio, but she says that she has had a presentiment that her future mission is to be accomplished upon some other sphere."

The tailor-made girl coughed discreetly, as she rose to go, and, as she elbowed her way through the crowd, a group of blond youths near the door heard her say, with the sturdiness of enunciation born of a strong, well-rooted conviction: "Well, one thing's sure enough, the fools aren't all dead yet."



MISS CURIOSITY—How did Marie look at the ball?

MISS RIVAL—Why, dear, I never even *hoped* to see her look so ugly!

THE CHANGE

"TIMES change, and the fashions change with them," mused the Old Codger, philosophically. "Still, lookin' at 'em critically, the changes in fashions and ways are not always as radical as they appear to be at first glance. The new thing of the present day is very often the old thing of some long-gone yesterday, rigged and administered in a new way. Almost everything that we invent nowadays, the Chinese forgot centuries ago. We die of complaints that our forefathers never heard of, but we are just as conclusively dead when they get through with us. The automobile kills us as thoroughly as the Car of Juggernaut used to.

"The women of the community formerly had a habit of informally gathering at the home of one of their number, and making over cast-off garments for the amelioration of the undone and pantsless heathen on some anonymous island away off yonder in the Pacific Ocean, and incidentally ripping up, turning wrong side out, cutting down, and putting together differently, the reputations of almost everybody else in the neighborhood, and occasionally somebody as far away as 'clear over to Grassy Hill.' Their motto, apparently, was to slay and spare not; and they surely hewed to the line, let the chips fall where they happened to. The affair was called the Sewing Circle.

"Nowadays, they have a regular organization that meets on set days, and drinks tea and eats up their neighbors' characters, and picks over the which and when and where of everybody's actions, and tries to discover who did what and how they accomplished it. They call it the Club. There isn't much difference betwixt the old fashion and the new, as far as I can see, except that the foreign heathen caught a few clothes from the former, and the heathen in our immediate vicinity catches the dickens from the latter. Otherwise, it is just the same old, painful disease with a nice, new name."

TOM P. MORGAN.



THE MERCHANT

(DAMASCUS)

- HIS eyes are like twin placid pools, by night
O'er-shadowed, yet with glints of starlight there;
His voice is winning as the evening air,
 wooing the rose in gardens of delight;
His smile is like a ray flashed on the sight
In some grim place that suddenly seems fair;
His thin hands move among the fabrics rare
As deftly as a woman's, and as light.

He shows you scarfs and shawls from far Cashmere,
And rugs of Kermanshah with velvet pile
And sheen of satin shimmering in the sun;
And should you dare to designate them "dear,"
What splendid indignation! Such the wile
Whereby his aim (likewise your gold) is won!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

THE DÉBUTANTE

AH, child, there should be daisies in your hands,
 Before your eyes of stainless heaven-blue
 Soft gloom of woods, and light of meadow lands.
 The fever heat, the noise, the whirl and glare,
 Phantoms of grace and mockeries of joy,
 Are not for you!

I look and love you, from sweet head to light,
 Sweet, unseen foot, as worldly men may dare
 Their poor soul-gifts to offer at the bright,
 Pure altar of young Beauty. . . . Kneeling there,
 The angels know, I breathe for you—even I—
 A mute, shamed prayer!

MADELINE BRIDGES.



SOME ASIDES

A MAN, who dresses younger than his years, courts suspicion—or a maid.
 Real knowledge is the fruit of the tree of experience.
 Truth is unpleasant only in proportion to our guilt.
 There is always something suspicious about anything that must be viewed
 from a broad-minded standpoint.
 The difference between the man with the hoe and the man with the rake-
 (off) is a pecuniary matter.
 Whom the public wishes to destroy, it first makes ridiculous.
 After a man's income is more than fifty thousand dollars, he finds relatives
 a nuisance.
 Those who withdraw to privacy to change their opinion, would also, from
 sheer modesty, refuse to embrace opportunity.



BEAR AND FORBEAR

OH, see the hairy, grizzly bear,
 He is not bare at all—
 He's full of grizzles everywhere,
 But does not care at all.

It's strange, when hunters go for bear,
 They don't forbear at all,
 But shoot the bear, who's unaware
 He should beware at all.

ALBERT LEE.

MISS DARCY IN DANVILLE

By Ethel Sigsbee Small

MISS DARCY sat down on the extreme edge of the small, immaculate bed, and looked about her. It was rather worse than she had fancied. She had known her uncle and aunt were poor and lived in the country, but, oh, dear! was that any reason why they should hang on the wall a lithograph of a damsel with vermillion cheeks, or tie a blue bow on the bureau?

She arched her delicate brows, dismally, and bit her under lip as she had a trick of doing when her chocolate was not brought her upon awakening, or when anything displeased. Then, the humor of the situation appealed to her, and she laughed, softly.

"Ah, well!" she said, taking the pins from her hat, and jabbing them into the red satin cushion on the bureau, "it isn't artistic, but it's very clean, and I have the guest-chamber—there's no doubt of that. I ought to be delighted, and I am." Then, as her eye caught that of the vermillion lady opposite, she frowned and hung a hat over her.

"Now you look better, my dear," she said.

Miss Darcy began unpacking her trunk, humming softly to herself the while. It was the first time she had done more than superintend this operation, and the manual work pleased her. She laid pile after pile of dainty garments on the bed; last of all, a sea of filmy lingerie, frothy with lace and gay with ribbons.

"Do you know," she said, surveying them critically, "I'm quite ashamed of you here? You look frivolous, and I am sure the vermillion lady does not

approve. I'll tuck you away before any one sees you."

A knock startled her, as she laid the last dainty garment in the drawer of the old-fashioned wardrobe.

"Who is it?" called Miss Darcy, poking in a refractory ribbon.

"It's just Dorothy," said a voice. "I wanted you to know supper will be ready at six. It's only five now, so you won't have to hurry." And she was gone, before Miss Darcy could recover from the surprise two words had caused her—"supper" and "six."

"Well, they must go to bed early, if they dine—I should say up—at six," she commented, "and that's a comfort, for I came here to sleep." She looked at her face in the mirror, and noted the circles under the beautiful eyes. "Yes, Beatrice, my dear, you need sleep," she said, pityingly.

She selected two gowns, simpler than the rest, from the rainbow-colored heap. One was high in the neck, the other low. She knitted her brows a moment over them, then decided in favor of the former.

"It will go better with the place," she explained to herself.

Just then, the vibrant tone of a masculine voice came drifting in her window. Mingled with it was Dorothy's young treble.

"H'm," Miss Darcy speculated; "is it possible men, young men, are extant in Danville?"

She threw a kimono over her white shoulders, and, going to the window, peeped out through the curtains.

A tall, broad young fellow stood below on the garden path. He held his hat in his hand, and the sun,

glowing red through a gap in the hills, changed his brown hair to gold. His face was turned to Dorothy.

"Turn a little this way, please," murmured Miss Darcy, in the tones of the professional photographer. "If your face is only as nice as the rest of you, you must be"—the young man turned—"you are—a beauty!"

Dorothy's voice floated up to her.

"My cousin has come; won't you stay to supper and meet her? Mother told me to ask you."

"Thank you; I should like to," said the "beauty," simply. Dorothy and her cousin walked over to the hedge, where a horse was tied. A moment later, he had galloped away, a picturesque figure in the red light of the sun.

Miss Darcy drew back from the window. She took up the high-necked bodice, and looked at it, disapprovingly.

Later, as the bell pealed through the house, a dazzling vision of beauty, in the low-necked gown, swept down the stairs to join the others.

A LETTER FROM MISS DARCY TO GEORGE REDMOND

Imagine Beatrice Darcy, if you can, of a cool, dewy morning not yet six hours old, awake, clothed and up for the day!

Well, not so very wide awake, for I am blinking a little, and not so very thoroughly clothed, for I am *en déshabillé*; but up, that is the main point—I emphasize it—up for the day!

This is a very wonderful place, George. You go to bed at ten, and you sleep. You sleep like one dead until the birds twitter and the cocks crow and all nature stretches itself and wakes; then you awaken, too. And you feel so rested, so wonderfully rested! Your eyes shine, and your cheeks are all pink when you look at them in the glass. So it is a wonderful place, you see, George.

But it is funny—so funny—I have to stop for a moment and laugh! There are no pictures—barring a lady with a remarkable complexion. I can't tell what she uses. No pink-shaded lights, no chocolate in the morning, no maid—I left Jeannette behind me—no music, none of those things which made life worth living, as I thought, yesterday.

But there are other things. There is a supper bell—at six; there is a moon over black hills; there is a pretty cousin Dorothy; there is a fat red satin pin-

cushion; and from my window I can see all manner of things—things that "moo" and "bah" and grunt and squeak. Only one thing doesn't do it all, stupid!

There is a man, too—a young man, and a beauty. He is as tall as you and fifty times better looking. Cruel? Perhaps, but when did I ever spare you? And I am too old to learn now. I wore a pink evening gown. He had never seen one. He didn't say so, but I could tell.

Your letter was handed me as I stepped on the train. I knew its contents before I read. "Number twenty-six," I said, mentally; and, it must be admitted, wearily. Yes, there it was.

No! no! no! On this point you are dull. Won't you understand? You are my friend, my best friend, if you like, but you are nothing else. And that is enough, I should say.

Ah, George, you went about it wrong. You have succeeded in convincing me that I am the most wonderful being in the world, but you have never made me think you are. Now, don't be stupid, please, again. Figuratively, for you, I have my fingers over my ears. They will never be removed.

A jangling noise breaks the silence. A fire, you would say, but I am wiser. That is merely a way of saying, "Breakfast is served." They say it differently in all countries. While the French have it, "*Le déjeuner est servi*," and the Germans, "*Das Frühstück ist serviert*," Danville simply jangles. Danville is a little country all to itself.

I bid good morning to all sluggards!

BEATRICE.

A girl, in a gray gingham dress and a wide straw hat, stood motionless, leaning against the hedge which inclosed an orchard. Her pretty, youthful face was drawn into sober lines, and her eyes, gray as her gown, stared out musingly into the green haze of trees before her.

A horse in the next field came whinnying to the fence; an apple plumped on the grass at her feet; overhead, a family of birds were disputing. She neither saw nor heard. Once, her thoughts caused a faint red to tinge the girlish outline of her cheeks; again, her hands opened and closed, nervously. Then, she resumed her quiet pose, staring straight before her, unseeing.

The faint sound of laughter, a woman's voice and the rustle of skirts, brought her wandering thoughts together. She started, looked to left

and right, like a hunted thing, then turned and, with a graceful swing of her lithe body, cleared the hedge beside her. Once on the other side, she dropped and lay, like a flower, in the long grass, motionless save for the rapid rising and falling of her breast.

Miss Darcy, picking her way daintily over the tangled grass, seemed the embodiment of Summer. Her white gown radiated a light all its own; a rose-colored parasol added a deeper glow to her small, flower-like face, and the sun was scarcely brighter than the hair which rippled, halo-like, about her head.

The man beside her was the one she had seen from her window, two weeks before. He seemed a little awkward, as if he felt himself to be of coarse, rude fibre beside this graceful, sparkling woman of the world. He held her sunshade helplessly, as if fearful of crushing it, and struggled to keep his great feet out of reach of the trailing whiteness of her gown.

John Marbury was good to look upon. The girl in the grass drew her breath sharply, as she watched him. His eyes were blue, frank and wide open as a child's; but the mouth and chin, the one firm, the other prominent, told of strength, determination and an unshrinking conscience.

Miss Darcy made a seat of a vine-grown log. What the girl in the grass had not seen, Miss Darcy drank in with parted lips and widened eyes.

Rugged old fruit-trees, apple, pear and peach, dotted the green turf in rows of orderly precision. Honey-bees, satiated with high living, droned sleepily through the orchard; butterflies quivered on the burdock by the hedge; a blue-bird called, another answered. The air was laden with Summer sweetness, and, over all, the sunshine, warm and life-endowing, gave of its fullness in a golden overflow.

"A-h-h!" breathed Miss Darcy, through nature-loving lips.

Her companion was watching her,

curiously. "Is it so beautiful to you?" he asked, wondering.

"It is heaven!" said Miss Darcy, ecstatically; then, indignantly, "isn't it to you?"

Another man might have said, "Yes," looking into her clear eyes the while, but John Marbury only shook his head slowly.

"I am used to it," he said, simply. "It *is* beautiful—I see it is when some one tells me; but I forget again. Until I saw how it affected you, I was looking at the fruit-trees with a farmer's eye, speculating as to the profit of this year's yielding, and thinking what annoying little fellows honey-bees are."

"Horrible!" cried Miss Darcy, drawing away from him. "I don't think I can quite like you after that; still"—relenting—"I feel much the same way toward other things. Take music, for instance; I learn a new song; I am entranced, overcome by it; for weeks, I sing nothing else; then, after a while, though people who hear it still enthuse, I am quite cold and quiet. It has lost its charm. It is fickleness, I suppose."

"I suppose so," said Marbury, quietly. His indifference piqued the girl. Other men did not sit thus, looking ahead of them. Though he did not admire nature, was that any reason why he should not admire her? It was what was required of every man. She tapped her foot, impatiently, with her sunshade, and bit her lip.

"Are you tired? Do you wish to go back?" asked Marbury, starting up.

"No!" said Miss Darcy, sharply, almost rudely. Her ill-humor was so apparent that her companion could not but see it. He looked questioningly into her face. Miss Darcy could not resist the surprise in his frank, blue eyes. There was something winningly childlike about them. She smiled.

"You mustn't mind me," she said, gently; "I am spoiled; every one spoils me. When I am cross, just

whistle, or walk about a bit. I soon get over it."

"I should not think you were spoiled," said the man, seriously; "I should say you had a nature too generous and big-hearted to admit of any spoiling."

"Well!" said Miss Darcy, drawing a long breath, and gazing at him in astonishment, "that is the first nice thing you have ever told me. It deserves to be rewarded. I'll read your fortune. Come, give me your hand."

She rested the big palm on her silken knee, and traced out the lines of it with the tip of one very small finger. What Miss Darcy knew of palmistry could not be found in any volume on the subject. She depended on a quick brain and an unfailing intuition for her deductions, and, though her methods might well have dismayed an adept, she never failed to please. Perhaps, the small finger hypnotized her victims into believing what she told them.

"You have a very strong character," began Miss Darcy, frowning wisely, with her head on one side. "You are a bit apt to be stubborn," glancing at his chin, "and like having your own way, rather than somebody else's. But you have, on the whole, a very good character."

She paused, continuing to study his hand intently.

"You would recommend me, then?" said Marbury, laughing. "'Will not kick or bite; ladies and children can manage him?'"

This side of Marbury was new to Miss Darcy, and she rejoiced in it. An impulse seized her to squeeze the big hand; but she restrained herself.

"Don't interrupt!" she said, severely, "and, above all, don't be frivolous; it breaks my train of thought."

Marbury meekly subsided, his eyes dancing. The small finger had begun its hypnotic work. Miss Darcy seemed to be tracing some very intricate system of lines. She brought the hand up close to her face, and studied it, intently. Her warm breath fanned

it, which was no doubt necessary to her "train of thought."

Marbury was watching her now. She knit her brows, apparently struggling with the complex intermingling of lines; then, she announced, in an emphatic voice:

"You are in love!"

It had taken some courage. She had made her voice big to cover embarrassment. The effect of this stroke was rather mystifying. Marbury's face grew grave. His blue eyes softened, and looked off into the distance.

"How do you tell that?" he asked, a little huskily.

"I never explain my methods," replied Miss Darcy, frivolously, to hide a sudden throbbing in the region of her heart. "It's all in your hand. What did I tell you about interrupting, sir? If you offend again, I shall give you a bad character."

"I won't even whisper," said Marbury, humbly. "Please go on; it is very interesting."

"Of course, it is," said Miss Darcy, with conceit; "my fortunes are always so. Let me see——"

She paused; her breath was coming a bit fast. Marbury's eyes were fixed on her; she wavered, searched in vain for a thought, colored, and then said, stammeringly:

"You—you have a very strong character."

"So you said," remarked Marbury, wickedly.

Miss Darcy looked up at him, indignantly. Her face was very close to his, and her eyes were snapping. She had intended scolding him, but the blue of his eyes, and the beauty of his manly young face, overcame her. She flushed a deeper pink, and her heart bounded.

The drooping of her darkly fringed lids, the little, frightened grasp of fingers on his own, would have been too much for any man. For a moment, Marbury shut his teeth hard, and tried to look away. Then, in an instant, it was all over. He had caught her to him, had kissed the trembling mouth, the down-drooped eyes, the rose-pink cheeks. Suddenly, he

pushed her away, and rose, pacing up and down, his head bent, his lips tightly drawn.

But Miss Darcy sat with closed eyes, and leaned her pretty head against the tree. Her lips smiled, and a wandering bee might have mistaken her cheeks for two satiny peaches, so red were they. Suddenly, she opened her eyes, and a little sigh shook her. Rising, she went to Marbury.

"I am going for a little while," she said, so low that he could scarcely hear her; "I wish to be alone to—think. Will you wait here for me? Sit down on the log, and I will come and meet you. Ah, you must see some beauty in this orchard now!"

Her great eyes were shining, and she half-stretched out one hand; but he scarcely seemed to hear, so consuming were his thoughts. His eyes were bent upon the ground.

"You will wait?" she breathed.

"Yes—yes," he muttered, "I will wait."

She gathered up her skirts, and ran over the grasses, in and out of the trees; a fay could not have been more graceful. But Marbury was not watching her. He sat down on the log, and passed his hand over his brow. He looked, instead, at a patch of gray in the next field by the fence; but his thoughts were far away from it. Suddenly, it moved, and he came back to earth, and found himself wondering what it was. It had a familiar appearance. He rose and walked slowly over to it. Then, he stood leaning on the fence, looking down, too overcome to utter a word.

The girl in the gray gingham dress lay with her arms drawn to her sides, the hands tightly clasped. She was staring up with eyes so full of pain that, at first, they did not see Marbury. Then, she gave a cry, and, turning her head, lay face downward in the grass.

Marbury cleared the fence, as she had done, and, in a moment, was kneeling beside her. He laid a hand on the slender shoulder, which was heaving convulsively. His voice shook as he spoke.

Jan. 1903

"Little girl—Dorothy!" he said. The girl made no answer. He lifted the straw hat which lay beside her, and kissed it, reverently.

"I was mad," he whispered; "I did not know what I did. I can never tell you what I shall suffer for that moment's madness."

The girl sobbed aloud. "You kissed her!" she cried.

Marbury said nothing. He sat beside her, his face drawn with pain. It did not occur to him to say more in expiation. He had sinned, and, oh, God! he must lose Dorothy.

The girl's sobbing ceased. Wondering at his silence, she raised herself slightly, and looked at him. The grief in his face brought the blood to her heart in a great, glad rush.

"John, you don't—love her?" she cried.

He looked at her, dully. "Love her?" he repeated. He seemed not quite to understand.

"You—you love me?"

She gazed as if life itself hung on his answer.

"I love you; I shall never love any one but you," he said.

The girl threw herself into his arms.

"Oh, John, kiss me! Let us forget that you ever kissed her. Oh, darling, don't you see I have been eating my very heart away?"

Miss Darcy came back through the trees, humming a little song. Her eyes looked eagerly for the vine-clad log. Her feet hurried ever nearer and nearer. Once in a while, she would stretch out her arms as if to welcome some one. Suddenly, the song ceased, and she stood quite still.

"God bless you, my sweetheart!" a voice was saying, and another answered, "Oh, I am so happy now—so happy!"

Miss Darcy's delicate brows arched higher and higher. She gave a little, faint laugh, but there was no mirth in it.

"So that's how it is!" she said, so softly that even the butterflies could not hear; "so that's how it is!"

Then, turning, she went noiselessly back over the way she had come. Once, she swayed a little and caught at a low-hanging branch. "So that's how it is!" she kept whispering.

A LETTER FROM MISS DARCY TO GEORGE
REDMOND

DEAR GEORGE:

I am coming home. Two weeks in Danville are quite enough for any one. It's rather a stupid little town.

And that's all a fraud about its being a good place for sleeping. It dupes you into thinking so for a time, just to make you stay. Then, before you leave, it has worn you out. The last two nights I have heard the cocks crow, and all the rest of the nerve-racking noises one hears about farm-houses, before I slept. And the breakfast bell! What an ungodly thing it is, to be sure!

Yes, I am coming home. I hang my hat over the vermilion lady, but I know she is there, just the same. The fat, red pin-

cushion offends my sense of the harmonious, and the moon has gone.

I am coming home. I want to be spoiled and admired and made much of. I want my chocolate in the morning; I need music and pink-shaded lights; I am hollow-eyed without them. These things are necessities to me.

From my window I can see an orchard bathed in midday sunshine. I never could bear orchards. Something about the sight of so much fruit seems to sicken me. I am afraid I don't care for nature—or Danville—particularly.

And Danville doesn't care for me! There you have it. Who of us would take a daisy were an orchard offered? But Danville is original. It will have none of orchards. It wants only little, soft-eyed, wild things with no perfume save the breath of Summer.

I arrive on the four-ten train Wednesday.
BEATRICE.

P. S.—Some time—not yet—if you ask again, I may take my fingers down and listen. You are a dear, good fellow, and I am getting on.



MAKING LIGHT OF LOVE

THE maid expects
Her beau to-night,
And fills the stove
With anthracite,
Because the air
Is raw and damp—
But quite forgets
To fill the lamp.

They make a match,
There in the dark;
And on the sofa
Have a spark.
And everything
To them seems bright—
Because their talk
Is very light.

HARVEY M. MILLER.



WHY is Echo always represented as feminine, when she never speaks until she is spoken to, and, at every repetition of what she has heard, continues to make it less?

THE BARGAIN

By Maud Stepney Rawson

IT wanted but an hour and a half to the time of the luncheon at the London mansion of Ephraim Kohn, to which his Highness, Robert, Grand Duke of Cuiratz and Pannava, the most notorious of *bon viveurs*, the most irresistible of wooers, was to be lured with the prospect of an informal meeting with Lady Hugh Mellars, the most invincible of women, the most exquisite of idealists, whom fate and the hereditary dipsomania of her husband's family had made into a "grass widow" for life, at the age of thirty.

His Highness, lured, I repeat, in order that, through his friendly puissance, Ephraim's talons—which already descended upon a great English industry—should achieve the monopoly of that industry in all German-speaking lands also, had, like a practical man, named the only bait that would draw him—a tête-à-tête with the coldest woman in London. His faith in his own irresistibility, backed by Ephraim's cynical assurance that the woman was a saint by heredity and circumstance, and not by choice—a firebrand in a sheath of ice—made his coming certain.

It is not for nothing that a sybarite tears himself away from his own yacht on the Solent, his own chef and his latest fancy, to travel up to London by special, on a grilling Sunday in mid-season; and Ephraim, when he boldly approached the Grand Duke for his own purposes, was perfectly aware that no second chance would be his, if heaven interfered and kept either the man or the woman from his house that day. He had

cleverly contrived the meeting, by means of subtle evasion toward the lady, by quiet and superb flattery of the man. He was sure of both; only accident could trouble him, and accident was a factor that he did not often admit into his carefully laid snares and plans.

The splendid *salles* of the beautiful house—the long antechamber, the first drawing-room, the second, the octagon room with its French china, the luncheon-room leading out of it—all stood open as for a great company. Boucher and Fragonard lent to the long suite, with its green-and-white, tented balconies, that very chastely wanton air which appears to be the aim of the large decorative upholsterers of the day. To babies and women, these saloons of the great house at the corner of the dignified square were assuredly delicate. "A nursery of the muses," had been the description of the suite by the man of fierce mustachios—Italian by name, but bred in Bermondsey—who had presided over its adornment. No masculine vigor had been suffered to alloy the all-enveloping lusciousness of the confection. Rosy curves, drifting petals and cloudy fleeces combined to suggest, if not dignity, at least a saponaceous coolness, a frolicsome urbanity.

Fresh flowers were everywhere, and the silence needed no break save the gliding of a sandal and the sweep of a woman's dress. It was lanced almost rudely by a man's voice, clear and glutinous, which gave an order on the stairs. Immediately after, its possessor entered the antechamber, passing

slowly and critically through the open rooms. Except for the splendid tailoring and the absence of livery, one would have held him for some sort of a steward, for he maintained the self-conscious proprietary attitude of a person whose relation to his surroundings is officially domestic—not the impersonal bearing so carefully cultivated by the average English gentleman toward his environment. But the tailoring was too perfect to be disregarded, though it accentuated the bullet head, the short stature, the rounded shoulders, the broad back and hips of the man. The face was pale and smooth and round. Yet, without the exaggeration of feature which vulgar tradition ascribes to his race, the pouching under-lids, the fleshy tip of the nose, the protruding lips, clean-shaven, proclaimed the man and justified his name. So he walked, Ephraim Mountjoy Kohn—he gloried, and rightly, in that Hebraic “K,” the removal of which so many friends had advised—walked without haste or indecision, self-consciously unconscious, unconsciously absurd, even as a shop-walker who struts between counters of soap and perfume.

He paced continuously through the semicircular suite, and, finally, went into a conservatory overhanging the corner of the square. It was delicately curtained, luxuriously appointed for lounging. It pleased him, and he smiled. A vision rose before him of a woman, very tall and slender and starry-eyed, with a face like a wind-flower, pale, with a delicate flush. The long, green chair, he thought, would frame her well, at right angles to the other one, a little larger, a little heavier and straighter. He could see the man in this chair lean forward and gently take her hand; he could picture the content in the eyes, the magnificent assurance of the one who wooed; he could feel the silence, so rich to himself, Ephraim, so eventful for the man's intrigue. He pictured him easily—a man of tall, heavy build, with a short beard

and small eyes, with the bearing of a prince who does not exist merely in fifth-rate romances, but runs horses at Newmarket and Auteuil. Such was the man—Ephraim's key, to greater power and still greater wealth. And the woman? the charming, aristocratic tool of Ephraim's cunning, the caviare to the appetite of an Epicurean? The Jew contemplated her with satisfaction—her and the possibilities of that neighborhood of the two in regard to himself, weighing the woman's ethereal, coldly repellent, tantalizing charm, against the Slavonic impatience of the man—the autocrat, of royal birth but without regality; imperious, but to whom the blood of many emperors could not give that which was truly imperial.

Who could foresee the result? Ephraim Kohn cared not at all. Put into the most condensed form, his mental argument ran thus: “Her ladyship comes; the Grand Duke, also. Their affairs are in the hands of the god of gallantries; but mine are in my own hands. His Highness's mood must not be allowed to cool. My business must come first, his pleasure after. I shall get his signature to those concessions, and then wish him luck. Her ladyship can shift for herself.”

He dismissed the affair as settled, and sat down under his green awning, behind a hedge of innocent marguerites, like a patient toad waiting under a burdock for its prey.

The great square was very silent; its more strictly British occupants were out at their church parade or their prayers. Now and then, a solitary hansom crawled along the road. Far away, Kohn heard one coming at a brisker pace. It entered the other end of the square, and stopped opposite. A parasol from inside gesticulated, and the hansom started off with a jerk, the parasol directing it. It passed his doors, returned, and pulled up. Aroused by sudden apprehension, he looked over the balcony. The woman who dismounted was not Lady Hugh. He did not even recognize the curling,

reddish hair, the creamy, opaque skin, of the lady in gray grenadine who sprang out of the cab. She must have made some mistake in the house. Ephraim breathed freely again. A minute later, his butler summoned him.

"I am not at home," snarled Kohn. He wished to avoid all superfluous company that morning.

"The lady saw you, sir, on the balcony, she says."

"Where's her card?"

"She says you knew her very well in Austria, sir. Miss Marietta Lindner. In the first drawing-room, sir."

"Very well; you may go."

Ephraim waited a moment before he moved. Of course, he knew now. The reddish hair, the curious pallor, the cool, lizard-like personality of the girl—he recognized them. Ten years ago, she had come to him, and, curiously enough, on the eve of a turning point in his life, in which, unexpectedly, she had played a chief part. They had parted honestly as good enemies, and his score was the heavier. He wondered if she had come to level up affairs in her own inscrutable, ingenious fashion.

He walked briskly, with outstretched hands, into the yellow drawing-room, and greeted her genially. "Not a bit changed, my dear Marietta."

The girl in gray returned his welcome, almost affectionately.

"So delighted to see an old friend, Ephraim!" she murmured.

Her voice was like a delicate breeze. Everything about her was cool, from her glittering, polished shoe to her glacial, green-gray eyes.

"I have been in London just a month, and have not met you," she said, "but I have heard of you and of your great schemes. Do you remember how, in the old days, I told you the success would come?"

"The old, charming days," he murmured.

"The old, contemptible, foolish days, my friend," she said, her voice now brilliant and tinkling, like glass pendants clashing in a draught.

"Oh, no, don't spoil it! We were a band of enthusiasts—say idealists."

She made a gesture, as if brushing aside futile memories. "It is all so trivial, now!" she said.

"And what is more important to you, now, Marietta?" he asked, seating himself familiarly in the other corner of the Louis Quinze sofa.

"Oh, many things; the pleasure of meeting you again, for one—" he kissed her hand, in the Southern fashion—"and the assurance that at least you will be a friend to me. Oh!" as he made a gallant movement, "don't kiss my hand again. It bores me—from you. I always hated that sort of thing."

"Of course. But you won't find too much of it in London. By the way, you must have forgotten London. Your English mother dead, your father a pedant, buried in an Austrian village, your brother hunted out of his regiment—"

She put her hand playfully over his mouth. "Thank you, Ephraim; that is enough of family history. My private affairs may interest you more. I have now come to learn London all over again. I find people charming." She named a number of houses, at which she visited. "And the Rustlewoods, friends of Lady Hugh Mellars, you know," she ended.

"You know Lady Hugh?" He knew, even as he put the question, and moved away to fetch her a cigarette, that her cold eyes were fixed triumphantly on him.

"Yes; I met her only two days ago, at a private view. But hers is one of those clear, tarnlike natures which one gauges quickly. And her ingenuousness is delicious." She laughed, a little, cool, patronizing laugh. "I lunched with her yesterday, and we drove together. Two women can tell each other a great deal, in a drive of two hours."

"An interesting woman," he said, quietly.

"And a woman who has been martyred to this beautiful English law,

which will not allow divorce from a madman."

"I think Lady Hugh has found her compensations, Marietta. Her reputation for saintliness, her splendid asceticism—are not these worth many tiaras and bad lovers?"

"She is above it all; and, because she is above it, your invitation to her to meet his Highness does not strike her in the light of a compliment."

And now Ephraim knew that battle was coming.

"Oh, but you should reverse the statement. It is his Highness who is complimented——"

"And you, who are under the obligation?"

"Any intercourse with such a woman seems to place a man under obligation," he returned, with the same quiet, evasive air.

Miss Lindner lay back in her chair, and half-closed her eyes as she regarded the man, like a painter who wishes to focus the values of his canvas.

"Just the same—the same Ephraim," she murmured, "with the same little dangerous tendencies toward miscalculation—little chinks that let the wind and rain into the mortar of his Spanish castles!"

"Your fantasy, Marietta, is as abundant and irritating as ever," he answered. "Business has rather knocked out of me my old appreciation of your pretty little ways of expressing yourself. Will you excuse me? I have had a busy week; I expect a busy afternoon. I should like to run up to the Park in my motor. Will you come, too?"

"I have not the slightest intention. I am due at Lady Hugh's almost immediately. I lunch there."

"Alone, Marietta?" he asked, firmly.

"Presumably with her."

He was silent a moment, walked across the room, and returned.

"Come into the balcony," he said, gallantly; "it is much pleasanter for a chat." Then, as he arranged her cushions, "It will be a great pity if her ladyship foregoes an excellent

luncheon and a still finer chance of furthering her own interests."

The girl leaned forward, coldly, admirably shocked. "Interests? Are you mad, Ephraim?"

"I mean that great ladies of unsailable virtue can feather their nests sensibly and without dishonor, through the kindly patronage of great personages of such wealth as his Highness."

"That's one of the points where your mortar crumbles," retorted the girl. "No, Ephraim, no. You may have any estimate you like of Lady Hugh. Call her asceticism vanity; call her a hybrid, a bloodless saint, an icicle; but do not suggest this other thing. I have only to tell her this, and it will keep her away from you for the rest of her life."

He saw his blunder, and laughed it away. "Forgive me; I meant no harm. Her ladyship is poor and very generous, I understand; at least, the women's picture-papers say so. She might require money for her schemes."

The girl threw back her head, and burst into peals of laughter.

"You are an infant," she said; "the thing is beneath contempt. In the first place, Lady Hugh Mellars has but to ask for money for charity, and it is given. Were she such a creature as your tarnished imagination suggests, do you think that to invite a woman of her position to a luncheon, to meet no one but men of more than doubtful reputation, would be the way to please her, or—or effect your own ends? These other women—those who do not care for the higher things—even they would not risk it, except under good cover. There's your blunder again, your crumbling mortar. You provide no cover for your hare, Ephraim. The hare is frightened, and your sport is spoiled!"

"Lady Hugh has put her own construction on the invitation," he said, with a splendid assumption of indignation. "I asked her openly, honestly, to meet the Grand Duke."

"Yes; but certain inquiries were made as to who else was going to meet him."

"You mean, *you* made the inquiries?" he snarled.

"It was my duty, as her friend. She confided her perplexity to me. Knowing you as I do, I guessed your anxiety for her presence. I am here to ask you what answer I am to carry back."

"The truth," he said, boldly; "exactly as I have put it in my letter."

"I needn't tell her that. I can tell her the other sort of truth—the sort that will keep her away, you know. And then, how about the Grand Duke's temper? Will he be in a good frame of mind for your purposes, Ephraim?"

He stooped over her for a moment, his face working with anger, his hands moving toward her. Her cold, green-gray eyes held him, and she spoke without a suspicion of fear.

"Give me a little more space, Ephraim. Don't lose your head—it will spoil everything. And I have a whistle on my chain. I can whistle up that cab, and get away. London now isn't like Pesth in the old days. You lose more caste now by being hasty than you would formerly."

He drew back slowly, looking grimly at her.

"If we were in Pesth now," he said, "and I were to lift up my hand, you, madame, would have to disappear, very quickly indeed."

"But we are in London," she said, cooingly, "and we both wish to stay here, don't we?—especially now, as it is such a brilliant season."

"I cannot see where the difficulty comes in with regard to her ladyship," he said, with a bored air. "I invited her courteously; she accepted in the same spirit. If she backs out of it now, she must make some decent excuse. But, then, you——"

"Ah, pardon me! She did not send me here. I have promised to find out, only—indirectly. She cannot afford to run these risks."

His fine indignation blazed forth again. "She, more than any woman, assuredly. Risk? The very word is ridiculous."

"Oh, no, Ephraim! oh, no! Gossip—little, forked tongues of sugges-

tion—you know it as well as I do."

"Pardon me. I may be a man whom the world has pretty well hardened, but, at least, I can recognize the idealistic point of view, when I see it, rare though it is. You and I, who know the world so well"—he turned upon her a hard, ironical smile—"we can understand those idealists, and can afford to envy them. You know the lady well."

"Certainly."

"You know her well," he mused, "and she believes in you—up to a certain extent. I congratulate you. If your energy can keep her away, how much of your gentle force will bring her here?"

"That depends on you, Ephraim."

"No," he answered, with gallantry; "on you. Exercise your old magnanimity, Marietta. Go and bring her here. You are my friend. If we were in Pesth, of course—" He rejoiced to see her hand clench suddenly, as she cut him short.

"Your enemy in Pesth, if you like, but in London your ally."

"By all means. Wherefore I ask you to bring the lady here. Unfortunately, my scheme does not admit of asking you to luncheon, dear girl. But, another day, you shall choose the restaurant, the menu, the opera to follow. To-day, as your sympathetic eye will discern——"

"Idiot!" she snapped; "do you think I wish your luncheons or your dinners? You are dense; you waste my time." She made a movement from the balcony toward the open window of the drawing-room, but he barred the way.

"I can whistle for a hansom," she said, defiantly, groping for the gold trinket on her long chain.

"And my men-servants can pay all the hansom in the square anything I choose—not to answer you," he said, politely. "Come, I can do a great deal for you. Bring Lady Hugh here."

"I can, but—I don't choose."

"Ah! It isn't worth while, dear girl?"

"It isn't worth my while, unless it is worth yours."

He took out his watch, and examined it. There were still forty minutes to spare.

"How much could you stand to lose over it, Ephraim?" she urged, softly.

"I don't intend to lose," he rejoined.

"Well, pay for it, if you like."

He faced her, deliberately. "I've forgotten how far you can stand up to a bargain, Marietta."

"Refresh your memory, and try me." She stooped forward, her lips shaping themselves almost into a kiss, as she spoke again. "I'll take it in notes, Ephraim."

She named the sum, and he shook his head—once more the wise, patient, toad-like creature, sure of his prey.

She lay back in her chair, arranging her laces. "Well, Ephraim, you know best. There is a vulgar little English saying about sprats and mackerel. A clever man like yourself knows exactly what is the proportion of the first to the second."

"Precisely."

"Then why not decide quickly?"

"Because, my dear girl, I have no proof of your power to get Lady Hugh here."

She smiled. "I know her—as I know most people—too well for their comfort, Ephraim."

"Again, I congratulate, not your friends, but you, though I remain a little incredulous."

"You see, there is a little incident—quite delicious and very romantic, and though no harm was done, it is of the sort that could be used destructively. It is connected with the days when Lord Hugh made his wife's life a hell, and before his relations thought it wise to put him under restraint. A charming young government official fell in love with her. The whole thing was planned. They—I should say she, for the man had no intention of such social sacrifice—contemplated flight and then residence in some splendid isolation—a fortress in Corsica, or a villa on the Adriatic, I

forget which. It never happened. There was a cab accident, a train smash, or something; I cannot remember. The episode remains a thing full of infinite possibilities. If Lady Hugh thought you knew of it, that you had hinted it to his Highness, that you had suggested it as the weak point in her defenses, the excuse for asking her to meet him privately, rather than publicly, do you not think any woman, even a courtesan, would set her teeth, and come and brave it out? It would bring her, but it would be hard work for you and the Grand Duke. She would come, and she would give him the tips of her fingers, look over the top of your head, and speak with her eyes blank. She would utterly torment you. What woman, under the same circumstances, would not do so? It would be a strong card to play, but it would be a dangerous one. Don't delay until it is the only one left in your hand and mine!" She cooed over his shoulder, and put her hand on his arm. "I'd rather have it in notes, Ephraim," she murmured, as he opened the *escritoire*.

He jerked his arm from her grasp, and pointed rudely enough to a seat. She sank into it, contented. A moment later, he moved from the table, and put a slip into her hands.

"Cheques are safest, between such old allies, Marietta. Bring Lady Hugh here within half an hour, and tomorrow my bank cashes this—the sum you asked. If you do not keep your share of the bargain—" He ended with his usual shrug, and then rang the bell.

"I will send you to Lady Hugh in my own motor," he said. "Use all your prettiest persuasion with our friend, for your sake as well as for mine."

The vehicle came around immediately. He handed her, gallantly, down the steps, and himself saw that the gray grenadine was safely harbored from the dust under a silken wrap.

In black lisse, with floating black

flounces, pearls twined many times around her white neck, Lady Hugh waited on the balcony of her tiny apartment. She drew back quickly into the room, when she saw the gray figure alight.

Marietta was breathless, after her ascent of the stairs. She had not waited for the lift. "Triumph!" she panted.

"You were away so long, I thought perhaps—" faltered the other, her beautiful eyes wide open, wistful.

"You underestimated difficulties. Never mind, here is enough to be quit of that debt forever, and to take us both to Paris for a jaunt." Marietta threw the cheque on the table as she spoke.

"Thank goodness!" Lady Hugh sat down suddenly, with her back to the light. She had tears in her eyes.

"Thank *me*, dear, not 'goodness.' It was hateful work. But I—shielded you!"

The other woman went to Marietta, and kissed her, impulsively.

"You are a wonder, an angel of mercy. The only thing that chokes me is that the little brute should think that the Grand Duke—I mean, that he should think that—that I can't take care of myself."

The girl laughed, lightly. "Your pride is ridiculous. It will be your

Juggernaut some day. Look at the thing, squarely. You go, Kohn is pleased, and you are pleased, the necessity being saved. The Grand Duke is charmed, piqued. One more feather in your cap, for *I* shall not chatter. Where's the harm?"

The Austrian girl stood in the balcony, while the nun-like figure passed into the carriage that waited. She kissed her hand gaily to her patroness, as the beautiful head, confident, radiant, was turned in farewell.

Lady Hugh sat erect, echoing her friend's last sentence, but lamely, like a parrot, as if to convince herself. Just in front of her, there turned into the square a phaëton. She saw it in profile, and the man who drove, and the imperial arms on the panel. She apprehended the toad-like figure that waited under the green awnings of a certain house, and she set her teeth. Then the pretty lies, that were so ready, rose to her lips, and softened her face again into the likeness of a flower. She gave the phaëton time to stop and drive away. Then, she, too, alighted and mounted the white flights of the splendid stairs, bringing at last something that was distinguished to the pink and white and gold of the decoration, and all that was most cloistral to the tender nudities of the frescoes of the great house.



TRAVESTY

SURELY, I should have seen that flower-face,
Say, in an English lane when Spring was new,
And high, white clouds were drifting in the blue,
And a glad lark made music in the place;
Where all about you was no thing more base
Than the pink hawthorn heavy with its dew,
And where my man's eyes, at the sight of you,
Should drop, unworthy of such maiden grace.

Oh, child, it should be thus, and yet, to-night,
Here, in the city's red iniquities,
Strange that I find you in this garish light,
With this hard mocking in your tired eyes,
And curled, red lips, set jesting at the sight
Of a man's tears at Fate's mad comedies.

MC CREA PICKERING.

A ROMANCE IN RUFFLES

I WORE this frock when first we met,
 One Summer afternoon,
 An airy muslin, frilled and flounced,
 With sprays of roses strewn;
 This was the gown of yellow crêpe,
 By Félix deftly planned,
 That marked the dinner where he dared
 Gently to press my hand.

This pale-blue chiffon, silver-fringed,
 A dream of elegance,
 Was witness of the tender hour
 When we sat out the dance,
 And he, in tones of music, begged
 One little flower; and this
 Pink satin robed me, when, beneath
 The moon, he stole a kiss.

This was the simple, girlish dress
 Of pure and fleecy white,
 In which he vowed I looked so sweet
 He could not say good night,
 And bent his dark and handsome head
 To my enraptured ear,
 And breathed the low, impassioned words:
 "I love you, love you, dear!"

This sweeping silk of somber black,
 With bodice close and high,
 I wore the rainy day he called
 To bid us all good-bye.
 Behold how soon the moths have made
 The dainty things their prey;
 His passion, too, was flimsy stuff,
 He loved—and rode away!

MINNA IRVING.



MADE HIM ASHAMED

THE Chicago man had been talking boastfully, after the manner of his species, but the New York man took him down several pegs very neatly, by observing:

"My dear sir, do you know that Chicago time is actually one hour slower than New York time?"

As for the Chicago man, he was covered with confusion, and presently stole away.

SUN IN THE VALLEY

By Arthur Stringer

ALL through the long Winter she watched him from her sun-lit chalet window. Even late into the reluctant, mountain Spring, she had looked for him, day by day, with languid anxiety, and had forgotten her own weakness in beholding him there, silently battling with their common enemy. The first bright morning he had crept, ghost-like, out into the sun, her tired heart had bounded like a young girl's.

When the brisk little sanatorium physician had casually remarked the strange coincidence of their cases, and, laughingly, dubbed them both prisoners of what he called "the five-thousand-feet tyranny," she had felt strangely drawn toward her unknown neighbor. She was on the point of asking many things more about him, but some momentary, new-born sense of shyness came over her, and the busy little doctor went on his way, and Margaret Wayburn went back to her window.

Their chalets were the last two above the sanatorium, on the winding Banff roadway that led to the springs. Far below them lay the little village and many hurrying waters. Above them were the pines and the snows and leagues of sun-bathed solitude. So, while men and women came and went again, once more happy and whole in body, the tall young Easterner had himself been looking out from his own windows at the frail woman, who appeared so girlish and flower-like in the great chair that always faced the window. He had gazed out, enviously, at her first brief excursion in an outlandish little mountain-cart, and had

looked on, with consuming misery, when she and her trained nurse played their first languid game of tennis.

Once, many weeks later, they had met face to face. It was a memorable day. He had been down to the village for the post that morning, and she had ridden out to Sun Dance Cañon and back. As they met on the narrow little mountain roadway, his heart was thumping so madly that he could do nothing more than bow gravely and pass on to his gate. But that morning she had gazed long into her mirror, and looked over her gowns—many sadly crumpled gowns, that she had not so much as thought of for months.

Then they met, formally.

It was the brisk little sanatorium doctor who brought them together. Cuthbertson looked down at the slender oval of her pale face, at the shadows of tender blue under the great, brooding, unsatisfied eyes, at the too full crimson of the lips, with their line of strange wistfulness—and they made him forget many things. She, too, gazed back into the unhappy face of the man, who was old before his years, who with her had walked the valley of the double shadow, who with her had found and lost many things. And, of a sudden, all the world changed for her.

On the next day, he sent her a basket of flowers, and a little note, after the manner of people of the living world. She pushed back her medicine bottles, and made room for them on her bedroom table, clinging to them, childishly, and fondling them, and even crying over them a little.

Two days later, they ventured forth together, on the sedatest of excursions to the cave and basin, she carefully bundled up in her outlandish little mountain-cart. And once back in her room that evening, she had been heard to sing, as she tried doing her hair in a new way. Then, she gaily declared that she was hungrier than any bear, and, for the first time in months, insisted on studying the record-sheets kept by her nurse from day to day.

One bright afternoon, the two exiles rode up the Corkscrew—she had laughingly told him that she had ridden her first horse over the tanbark of Durland's—and dismounted on the summit of Tunnel Mountain, sending their ponies back with the guide.

The air was soft with early Summer, and full of the golden light of a late afternoon. About them towered the eternal snows of the Selkirks. Beneath them were valleys of dusk and silence, and twining green ribbons of rivers, and slopes of peaceful pine, through which they could see little, home-like clusters of chalets, where, they knew, men and women were fighting their desperate final battle of life and death.

Together, they sat facing the east, wistful-eyed and silent. She had just told him that people in Banff always faced the east—always looked longingly out from those barrier mountains to where, half a world away, lay cities and the fullness of life, movement and tumult and laughter, memories and regrets.

The woman sighed. The man's eyes were still turned out over the great mountains, where the broken valley of the Bow River dashed and fought and twined eastward to the foothills and the world beyond. To Cuthbertson, it was like a first glimpse out through his prison bars.

"Doesn't it seem hard"—and, even as he spoke, he kept his face turned still toward his lost east—"doesn't it seem hard that men and women who hunger for all that life holds—that you and I, who demand its movement and color and delirious play of good

and bad, and have cried out for its last bitter drop, should find ourselves shut out, in this way, from all that world we desire so much?"

She felt the shadow of some other life fall mistily between them, and fought against it.

"Yes," she laughed, "here we sit, like two old eagles on a rock, looking out on it all!"

"And beholding it eternally beyond us!" he said, bitterly.

"But, after all," she asked, musingly, "is it so different?"

"Haven't you always wanted it back? Wouldn't you run away to it this moment, if you could?" he asked, impetuously, not noticing the shadow that crept into her face.

"I have been very happy here!" she said, simply.

"But haven't you always hungered for that other, older life?"

"Yes, it was different," she sighed, "at first."

Her mind flashed back to that last parting with her own people—the gray afternoon; the fine, drifting rain; the loneliness and sense of desolation that had fallen suddenly on her; the gush of hot, hopeless tears that had rained down her face, as she stood and watched their carriage rumble away to the little station; the last flutter of a white handkerchief; and, then, the first black hour of her solitude, when the final link that bound her to all the world seemed shattered.

Then, for a moment, she gazed about her, at the great mountains and the pines and the valleys of eternal silence. The vastness and the beauty and the solemn majesty of the scene filled her heart with a new thankfulness, and she said, in an undertone:

"But still, life is life!"

"But is mere *living* life?" he cried. "Don't you always feel that we are shadows, disembodied spirits, mere ghosts, brooding our days away up here, forever beyond the gates?"

"Were you always so happy there?"

"No, not altogether; but, still, I feel like an outcast Adam here. And the guardian angel, in our case, is a frock-

coated little gentleman, with a flaming stethoscope."

She laughed and breathed deep.

"It might be worse!" she said.

He looked at her, for the first time, long and intently. His first thought was that she must have been a very beautiful girl. His second thought was, as their eyes met, that she was an even more beautiful woman. He had noticed of late, for reasons he could not fathom, that her mere presence half-reconciled him to his exile.

"After all, I suppose it's that old drunkenness for doing things," he said, apologetically. "But, oh, if they'd only given us ten years more of it!—only ten years more of it! Then, we might have packed up and crept away here, tired and satisfied!"

"Yet, could we?" she asked. "Wasn't that passion for living the very thing that defeated itself? It was always so hurried and feverish and elusive—that old life, such a mad clutching at everything, that the very reality of it escaped us!"

"Yes, I've felt that."

"Whoso loveth the world shall lose the world! I've often thought that such a sorrow as ours is the chastening blow, that is more a kindness than a cruelty, in the end."

He smiled, grimly, and shook his head. Action, aggression, opposition, that had been the philosophy of his life.

"Don't you remember the bear that knocked the fly off his master's forehead? He smashed the poor man's skull through that little attention, didn't he?"

He noticed the distress with which her grave eyes looked at him, and smiled, repentantly.

"You see how hard it's going to be, making a philosopher of me! This way of looking at things is all so new to me! The men and women in those big cities of ours are always too busy and hurried to think these things over and work them out for themselves!"

"But, some day, they *must* awaken."

"Yes, I suppose so. But, if Wittenberg had been a school of practical sci-

ence, and Elsinore an engineer's office, I guess we'd never have had a *Hamlet*."

He looked at her, and placed his hand on hers.

"But I *do* want you to teach me to feel and think!"

"Which means to live," she said, happily. He still held her hand in his, for the world and its ways counted as nothing to them. Their eyes met, unembarrassed, and, for the second time, the thought came to him that once she must have been a very beautiful girl. The sun sank lower over the Selkirks. A fresh chilliness came into the clear, afternoon air. A new happiness and a new sense of curiosity took possession of him.

"Will you tell me how it was you—you came here?" he asked her.

She laughed, sadly, and looked out over the mountains a moment, before she answered.

"It was such a foolish thing. We were living in Washington that Winter."

"Go on."

"It was after a legation dance. I drove all the way home, through the cold morning air, without a wrap!"

"Thinking so hard—of him?" said the other, as a vague flame of jealousy for all that lost youth and girlhood crept through him.

"Yes," she answered, without regret, "thinking of him! Now tell me how—how it happened with you."

"Just as foolishly. It was all over my first-born, my one and only bridge. A March freshet was going to swallow up my three months' work, and my reputation with it."

"Yes?"

"It was frightful weather—up on the Canada Atlantic road. I fought with it for two days, wet through and without sleep, I think. I saved the bridge; but you see it rather got the better of me, in the end."

"I am glad—it was that way," she murmured.

She rose from their rocky little seat, and looked down at him, out of eyes that were luminous with a new light.

"We have both walked the valley

of lost hope, then," she said. And, as they rode homeward down the winding bridle-path of the Corkscrew, she was strangely silent, and, from time to time, he wondered just what that lost hope in her life had been. As they turned up toward the little chalets on the hill, and he looked at the pale face, slightly flushed with the air and movement, it was he, himself, who said gratefully to his own heart:

"It might be worse!"

From that time on, the days seemed to slip magically away. Each morning, he sent Margaret Wayburn his *Herald*, six days old, and now and then flowers, or a little basket of fruit, which, she knew only too well, had come all the way from a strange region of such things known as "Broadway." Once, over the first box of chocolates which he had sent in to her, she had wept openly and foolishly—it was so much a memory and a symbol of lost things to her.

She, in return, gave him many of her books to read; some of them, indeed, they even read together. A day that stood out and remained forever in their memory was the afternoon they read together the story of *Sebastian Van Storch*, from Walter Pater's "Imaginary Portraits." One declaration of faith from the lips of that gentle Dutch philosopher, with whom they had so much in common, refused for all time to be driven from Cuthbertson's mind.

"Joy is but the name of a passion, in which the mind passes to a greater perfection or power of thinking; as grief of the passion, in which it passes to a less."

He struggled manfully to catch at the twilight contentment, the Indian Summer sort of happiness, of his gentler and more fragile companion. She saw this effort on his part, and helped him joyously and as best she could. Sometimes, she fought with him against his blacker moods. Sometimes, she slipped over to his chalet, with an armful of flowers she had gathered with her own hand; or rearranged, with mock sternness, some new piece of fur-

niture; or shook her head, gravely, over his neglected garden.

She had a piano sent up to her own chalet, and, in bad weather, when the mood for reading before the cheery little fire passed, she played for him; and sometimes sang—tenderly and beautifully, he thought, though, happily, he never dreamed just how much the effort was costing her.

Often, too, they made little journeys off to the different mountains close about Banff, and sometimes, in fine weather, went fishing for a long, glorious, golden day.

One day, she startled him by solemnly asking if the little launches on Devil's Lake were one-half as fine as the swan boats in Central Park. And, day by day, the drag-net of memory kept bringing up to them the names of common friends and forgotten scenes and things that had been left mistily behind them.

Yet, through all that harking back to the past, there was one question which Cuthbertson shunned most jealously. Just how free her hand and her heart might be, he had never dared to ask. Just what that lost hope had been, he had not the courage to fathom.

Nor was he the only one half-willing to let such riddles remain unanswered, pleading with fate that the awakening might not come until the end. Margaret forlornly argued with her rebellious soul that he and she were no longer of the world where such things counted. She tried to tell herself that this thing so like death had severed all those old ties for them, if what she mutely feared might indeed be true. She asked, hungrily, only for the passing moment. She clung, desperately, to those poignantly happy days, with a belated and strangely altered passion to drain existence to the last drop, as Cuthbertson had put it.

He, in turn, began to feel, more and more, how much he owed to this gentle and wistful-eyed woman, still a girl in so many things. He often questioned himself if she were not

right, if the blow which had shattered the body, and allowed the soul to grope and creep up to the sun through its broken shell, had not been kinder than he had at first thought. She had taught him to love flowers, to see beauty in trifling things, to wonder at sunsets and rain and snow, to catch the spirit of the quieter and littler things of life, the things which the old-time man of action in him, crushing feverishly on to his ends, had missed.

He beheld his old East, and all that it stood for, growing more and more insubstantial. He even caught himself, at times, weaving fancies about the future, and, all along, found himself battling more desperately than ever for his lost health, and gazing less often eastward over the mountains. He was startled to find how smoothly and quickly the weeks slipped past.

Then, early Autumn came to Banff. Summer was over and gone once more in the valley of lost hopes. They were together on the summit of Tunnel Mountain, intangibly saddened at the touch of Winter in the cooling air, drawn closer to each other by some fugitive sense of loss.

Margaret looked out over the peaks touched with wine-glow, that softest curtain of rose-mist which Twilight lowers about her barren snows. The ghost of a breeze gently rippled the musing woman's bright, brown hair, as she faced the silent mountains, so wrapped in Autumnal peace.

"Love is—the wine-glow on the wastes of life!" she had once said to Cuthbertson, from that same outlook, and her brooding eyes seemed to be saying it again. She was very happy.

"To think," she said, dreamily, "to think I came here to die!"

He, too, wondered at the strange sense of happiness that had taken possession of him. He looked at the fresher color of the slender oval of her face, at the dusk-lidded eyes, at the wind-blown tresses of hair, and the full knowledge of his love came

to him, quietly, softly—as the flower unfolds.

He turned to her, and took her idle hands in his, as he had done in the same place so many days before.

"If God would only grant me a thousand years of such peace and silence and sunlight—with you!" he cried.

"Perhaps He will, some time!" she said, musingly, looking away.

"No, I don't mean that! I want you here, now, on this earth!"

She lifted one eloquent hand to her breast, and did not answer. But he understood.

"We will not—we must not—no, no; neither of us could die!" he protested, passionately.

The brooding, unsatisfied eyes smiled down at him, as the woman, and never the girl, can smile.

"All these weeks I have wanted to ask you something, and have never dared," he went on. "May I now?"

"Yes," she answered, faintly.

"It is if you—can't you guess?"

She nodded. "I, too, have wanted to ask the same thing," she answered, timidly, yet without guile.

They were boy and girl again, in the garden of youth.

"Then it *can* be?" he cried, impetuously. But she drew back, waiting and ready to face the worst in that one moment. "Can you say you are free, absolutely free?" she asked, pale and grave even to sternness.

"Free, free as that big cloud over Cascade Mountain!" he answered, boyishly.

It was more than she had asked for, she told her throbbing heart. It was so much more than she had asked for!

"And, from the first day, I have loved you, and wanted you!"

"But you have forgotten!" she forlornly cried.

"Can you, and will you, love me? Will you come with me?"

"We are shadows, ghosts!" she murmured.

He only drew her down to him, and held her captive there in his arms.

"Ghosts! Then we'll wring the last drop of happiness from our ghost-land!"

She looked at him one lingering, frightened, girlish moment. Then, for all time, there could be no turning back. In the quiet twilight, he kissed her. And their kiss was far from being the kiss of ghosts.

Again and still again, she turned back to him, and held him to her bosom, hungrily. In that alone, she was strangely different from the girl—for she had learned how lonely life could be.

It was two weeks later that the brisk little doctor from the sanatorium chucklingly put down his auricular stethoscope, and beamed at her over his spectacles.

"Tell me," he said, "how would you like to take a trip East—in a few weeks, say?"

She turned on him, startled and white.

"What do you mean?" she cried.

"I mean there's not any use your staying around here much longer, Miss Wayburn. You're cured, you know!"

She put her hand up to her throat, with a little cry of horror, and her eyes were wide with anguish.

"No, no!" she moaned; "not that, not that!"

The little doctor looked at her, dumfounded. His patients had never been in the habit of taking such things after that fashion. She had misunderstood him, obviously.

"I mean, you're cured, perfectly cured, Miss Wayburn! You can go where you like—with precaution, of course, for the next year or two, you know! It's marvelous, this improvement during the last two or three months; quite marvelous!"

She caught feverishly at his arm.

"You must promise me one thing," she panted. "You must say nothing about this—nothing! Promise me!"

The little doctor went away with knitted brows, carrying with him a picture of a pale-faced woman pacing up and down and wringing her hands.

Never before had he known patients who were not ready to shake the dust of Banff off their feet with joy. He wondered just what tie could be holding the woman to what he had long called the Valley of Lost Cases.

Some subtle difference in Margaret did not escape even Cuthbertson, lost as he was in the maze of many new emotions. More feverishly than ever, she seemed to thirst for all that the passing moment might hold. She accepted each happy hour with a pathetic tremulousness that disturbed him and filled him with wonder. A veil, which, with all her efforts, she could not thrust aside, had fallen between them. She was of one world; he was of another.

It was one tranquil morning, late in September, that she turned to him suddenly, as they sat watching the drifting mists above Bow Falls.

"Tell me, if you were well and strong again, if they came and told you that you were quite free to go back to—to that old world of yours again, you would go, wouldn't you?"

He gazed at her for a moment, out of startled eyes, and then looked, uneasily, into the valley below. A flush stole over his face, and he found it hard to answer her.

"I didn't mean to hurt you, dear; only, I wanted to know," she said, pitifully. She told herself it was not right to put him to such a test.

"I could never leave you!" he said, at last; "never!"

"But if you were free?" she still pleaded, tremulously.

He took her troubled face between his two sunburnt hands, and she knew her love no longer drifted on the wavering tides of her belief in him.

"You are life; my world, everything to me, now!" And with his lips he kissed away the quiet tears that had crept into her eyes. He drew her to his breast, and she was content to lie there, happy, satisfied, protesting within herself that she had nothing more to ask of life, arguing with her heart that her cup of happiness was full to the brim. But, for all time, she

must be of one world, and he of another.

Before Margaret's open fire that evening, they talked over the arrangements for their marriage, as other men and women of the world do and have done. From her windows, she had pointed out to him, as darkness settled over the valley of the Bow, the little horseshoe of lights in the lower village, which she always fancied to look so like the box-circle of the Metropolitan on an all-star night.

"For a year, now, I've peopled that little circle of lights with ghosts. I've given theatre-parties to them, and watched them rustle in and fill box after box. I've married them off, and made them happy, and killed a few of them—and I've actually seen a *Brünhilde* step out from the wings there, in that dark clump of pines, and have taken the rain on the roof for the patter of their gloved hands!"

For the first time, he realized that, with all her protests of happiness, with all her resignation, she was homesick, through fleeting moments at least, for that world of men and women and color and movement and light.

"Wouldn't you like to have a bridesmaid or two come out?" he asked her; "just for the wedding, and for the sake of old times?"

"No, no, dear!" she cried. "They are not of our world now. They are not of us, and they would only—only make us unhappy, perhaps!"

Through a little gust of sudden tears, she clung to him, silently, piteously.

It was decided that it should be a very quiet affair, in the little village chapel. Banff would be deserted by that time. There would be left only that ghostlike remnant which lingered on to battle, despairingly, for a month or two more of existence. But Margaret said there should be flowers and music; those two things she could not forego.

Then, a silence fell over them, and they looked into the fire, thinking their own thoughts.

The busy little doctor from the sanatorium found them there, when he bustled in an hour later to thank Margaret for the gift of her discarded bath-chair to his children's ward. If his coming brought a strange constraint with it, he failed to notice it.

"Hadn't we better tell him?" whispered Margaret, uneasily, as she rose to meet him.

Cuthbertson flushed up like a boy.

"No, no; not yet!" he cried, guiltily. Then, the brisk, incisive voice of the little doctor broke in on them.

"By the way, when are you going east?" It was Cuthbertson to whom he spoke.

"Banff suits me so well, doctor—" stammered the other.

"You don't mean you are going to—?"

"Yes, I intend to stay here—always!" the other broke in, decisively.

"Do you know, Miss Wayburn, I've a pretty grave suspicion this big neighbor of yours has robbed a bank or two in his time!"

"Doctor!"

"—or made away with somebody's money before he came West!"

The half-smile of interrogation died on her lips.

"What is it?" she asked.

"Well, when a man up here comes to me and gets pounded about, and is told that he's sound as a dollar, and is ordered to pack up and go back to his work, he usually goes. We don't need to argue with 'em, as a rule. But, when he hangs around and says he'll try the goat-shooting the other side of Stephen for a month or two, and the trout-fishing down Emerald Lake way for a month or two, and chalet life up in the mountains for a year or two, it looks bad, very bad!"

The woman gazed at her lover for one long, silent minute, and then she knew the meaning of it all. In that ultimate, supreme moment, they stood together again, re-united, of one world.

THE genuine optimist has the supreme felicity of not being open to conviction.

Jan. 1903

THE MAGIC

YOU who saw through my disguise,
 Though I came so poor,
 Let me bless your true two eyes
 And your open door.
 Yes, I am a happy one,
 Hark! and tell it not;
 With the wandering and the cold
 I had half forgot.

Take the charmèd seeds I lay
 In your willing hand:
 Some would cast them all away;
 You will understand.
 Trust the bud to come to flower,
 Trust the flower for fruit;
 Listen, in the Wintertime,
 For a cricket lute.

Here are blessings all from me—
 Though they look like tears—
 For your wisest eyes that see,
 And your heart that hears.
 I am higher than I seem,
 Fair as I would be!
 Oh, I bless your heart that hears,
 And your eyes that see.

They were ragged gifts I showed,
 But you took the sense
 Of the bird-nest from the road,
 And the lucky pence.
 And, for all the spells I weave
 Every time I pass,
 Simple folk will only see
 Cobwebs on the grass!

JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY.



DEADLY INSULT

"WHY did Colonel Fireater kill Tenterhook?" asked Gummey.
 "Tenterhook had described the colonel as an inoffensive man," replied
 Glanders.

VASSALS OF FATE

By Edward Clark Marsh

AS Ashe swung his automobile around the curve, and into the short drive that led up to the old country house, he laughed, quietly, seeing ahead of him a red-headed boy, whose leisurely gait proclaimed his genus no less than the yellow envelope he carried in his hand.

"I've beaten my message; she won't expect me," he said, half aloud, as he brought the big machine to a standstill beside the startled youth.

"Telegram for Mrs. Vearing?" he queried, briskly. "I'll sign. There's no answer. Don't be alarmed; I'll give it to Mrs. Vearing," as the boy looked his astonishment.

Ashe stuffed the missive in his pocket as he puffed his automobile up the drive, then he jumped out and ran up the steps to the broad veranda, alert anticipation in every movement. Mrs. Vearing met him at the door.

"Arthur!" she cried, with the glad surprise of old friendship. "What brought you here?"

"That," he returned, laconically, nodding over his shoulder, and he held her hand as long as friendship might permit—or a very little longer; "and the news that you had returned. Jack Delavan told me in the Waldorf, just"—he drew out his watch—"three hours and ten minutes ago. Not bad time, is it? I don't—why couldn't you let a fellow know?"

The first words were gay enough. For the moment, he had been unconscious of everything but the joy of seeing her again. Then, he felt a curious restraint, as he recollected, suddenly, all that had passed since he had last spoken with her. Something of the

same thought must have occurred to her, for, the first surprise of meeting over, she led the way, silently, into the cool, shaded drawing-room, and motioned to a chair. He dropped into it, and caught himself on the point of exclaiming aloud, as he saw a narrow beam of light, struggling past the shade, fall on an old portrait opposite, one of Vearing's ancestors, twisting into a curious leer the native, benevolent smile of the face. At the same hour, on just such a day as this, little more than a year before, he had last sat in this room, in this very spot. And, while the burial service was read over the body of Tom Vearing, that face in the portrait, with the beam of light falling on it and twisting it into the same wicked grin, had burned itself into his consciousness. That it should confront him now seemed a sardonic jest.

He pulled himself together, with something of an effort, and turned to the woman who sat near him. With one glance, he knew that the subtle charm of her face had lost none of its potency for him. But the old, compelling power seemed to have melted into a more wistful attraction; she looked tired, and a pathetic, drooping line of her lower lip gave the lie to the proud carriage of her head. She had sunk down on a divan, and the answer to Ashe's question came slowly.

"I told no one. Jack Delavan was at the wharf to meet some friends, and saw me. I didn't come to see people, but to get away. I didn't know—I thought I might return to Europe, very soon. And I didn't write you, because—" She looked up, and then

dropped her eyes, suddenly, before the fixed devotion of his gaze.

"You ought not to have treated an old friend so." He spoke with an intentional deliberation. "But you're here, and I'm here, and I'm glad—I'm glad to see you. So, I shall forgive your silence. But where have you been? What have you done? Where are you going next?"

Mrs. Vearing suppressed a sigh. "I've been everywhere, and done nothing. You know where we went first—Naples, Rome, Florence, the Lakes—the regular southern trip. I was too indifferent to choose my route. Jean liked it in Italy, and we stayed two months at Lugano. She would have stayed a year, for she became great friends with Harmer—Philip Harmer, the novelist, you know."

"So, you know Harmer?" There was surprise in Ashe's tone. "You are lucky. He has the reputation of being unapproachable. He's a great man, they say. How did you find him—decent and civilized? Great men seldom are."

Perhaps, it was the heat that spread a dull flush over the woman's throat. "Mr. Harmer is reserved and peculiar, but he is very brilliant and agreeable when he chooses to be." She was thinking of certain warm evenings at Lugano; of later long walks and drives about Mentone; of certain enchanted days in England—days when her cousin and companion, Jean Deming, whose audacious good-humor first brought them Harmer's friendship, had tacitly acknowledged the fitness of the famous man's devotion to the young widow who had broken down the last barrier of his seclusion; days when he had loitered with her by roadsides and on mountains, in parks and in forests, talking of his work, his discouragements, his hopes.

"We went to Geneva from Lugano, and then to Mentone for the Winter, then to England in the Spring, wandering about in the Lake District." She hesitated. "At Grasmere we came across Mr. Harmer again." She did not tell her listener that Harmer had

followed them wherever they went; that never had he left them for more than a week, since the day they first met at Lugano.

The sigh that had been repressed suddenly escaped, and Ashe, not understanding, felt his love fighting with his sense of the world's injustice toward this woman. She seemed to confess, against her will, that the burden of life was, for some inscrutable reason, too great for her. He remembered the daring, spirited independence of her girlhood, and wondered that it had been broken by the seven years' misery of her married life. It had not been Vearing's death, he knew; that had been a relief. He had known her well—better than had any other.

"And whom have you seen?" he asked. "You must have met many friends, over there. Did you see the Cornishes at Monte Carlo?"

"No; they left two weeks before we arrived. We met the Burrells at Geneva, and Fred James. Mrs. Wellington was wandering as aimlessly as I, and we encountered her, several times. But we missed most of the travelers. We kept away from most of the gay places. It was the height of the season in London when we got there, and we stopped only two days. I didn't wish to see them—all the gay crowd. I tell you, Arthur, I want to get away from them all. I don't wish to see even my best friends. Of course, I'm glad you came; you are different. But the others—I know I shall be thought ungrateful, but I can't help the feeling."

"Bertha"—the familiar name of earlier years came unnoticed by either—"how is it? Is life no easier? Are you unhappy?"

"Yes—and no." She looked up, with a little smile. "It is easier—yes. You know that Tom—he didn't help me to live. I am sure now that I never loved him. He fascinated me; he was handsome and brilliant, and I didn't know him, at first. Then, he grew indifferent. You men knew his dissipation. There is no use in ignoring it. And he was unhappy, too; so, it is better. But the world is more com-

plex than I used to dream, Arthur. And yet it is so little—so petty; it's not worth trying to work out the puzzle. I'm weary of it. There was more to live for when I had Tom's neglect and the disgrace of his life to fight against. Now there's nothing to fight—and I'm tired, tired, tired of it."

Both were silent a moment. Ashe was trying to steady his voice to speak, beating back the impulse to take her in his arms, and defy her will to resist. And to Mrs. Vearing had come, suddenly, the thought that this year had not been altogether the unhappy, ennuyé time she had pictured. A strange, feverish year it had been—a year of alternate hope and depression—but not altogether unhappy; no, not altogether. She recalled the long days with Harmer, when the strange man—low of stature, broad of shoulder, with his rough lock of black hair shading his rugged face and sad, half-closed eyes—had looked at her as from another world.

The silence was broken by Ashe, and his voice had in it a certain gentle tenderness, at variance with the brusque, simple heartiness of the man.

"Bertha, can't you leave it all alone, and rest? Can't I help you to rest? I don't need to tell you my love—you've heard it many times. I can't give you much. All I have has been yours, since we were children together. But I can love you, my own, and perhaps that is what you need to save you from yourself. Do you know how it broke my heart to have you so alone, after—after poor Tom died? But I said nothing, then, knowing my love could not change, and hoping that some time you might even be glad for it. Hasn't the time come?"

The woman turned slowly, and looked at him. Something of the fine generosity of this man's love, which she had always taken for granted, seemed to come to her. Her voice, when she spoke, had a note of awakened tenderness.

"Arthur, you have always helped me, and your love is the best thing I have left, now. You are so magnifi-

cent that I wish I could give you all you want. If my life were worth anything, I would give it to you gladly. But I don't love you, and such love as yours must be returned. I can't—"

"But, Bertha, you don't understand that I wish you just as you are!" He had interrupted her, impetuously. "I want no impossible love—only yourself, as you are, tired and ready to give up the struggle, but with the confidence I know you have in me, and, perhaps, with a little regard for a very old friend." His voice grew wistful, as he crossed the room, and stood, his hands behind his back, looking down at her. "Can't you take me on that basis, without any pretense, Bertha?"

His humble faithfulness touched her, and, with her desire to satisfy his love, came, suddenly, a longing for the rest she knew he would give her. He was right; she was ready to lean on him, to let him bear the burden of life for her.

The thought of Harmer made her heart ache, hopelessly. She knew, as well as she knew she loved him, that he loved her. It had been often in his eyes, in his voice; never in his words. He had followed her about as though fascinated, his will to escape paralyzed. When she had suddenly resolved to sail for America, he had startled her hitherto quiescent love into consciousness of itself, by telling her, unhesitatingly, that he would sail on the same steamer. The long evenings on the ocean had been the best of all. And then, that last night, as they had talked of the future, he had said, in answer to her question: "I shall publish my book, and then—there is nothing." The dead hopelessness of his voice, as he looked at her, told her, once for all, that they were not for each other—why, she knew not. There was something of mystery in Harmer's life that she could not fathom, and he had never chosen to explain. But she felt, as he had felt, that hope was hopeless, and, in the week since she had seen him, she had fought her passion back behind the bars of

her pride, and shut out, resolutely, the dream that had struggled into life. Henceforth, there was to be no unavailing regret for Harmer; only the dull ache of a stifled love. Worn out by the struggle, she turned, with something of relief, to Ashe's unshakable steadfastness.

"Arthur," she said, slowly, half-reaching out her hand to touch his arm, and then drawing it back; "do you mean that you would take the little—the very little—I could give you, in return for your big, honest love?"

"I wish nothing in return," he answered, unsteadily. "I wish only to love you, and have you feel my love, always; to help you, and have you know I am helping to protect you from yourself. I know you do not love me—that can wait."

"Listen, Arthur." She warded off the question in his eyes, and spoke thoughtfully, almost solemnly. "We are neither of us children. I am twenty-eight—I was only twenty when I was married; how could I have been wise?—and you are—you must be thirty-one, aren't you? I married once, for love, as I thought, against all reason, against the advice of every one. And the marriage was a failure, a grievous failure. Leaving out of the question his dissipation, we were utterly unsuited to each other. For the things that really counted with me, he cared nothing. I liked the country and the open air, riding and shooting. I liked music, too, and books and quiet. He cared for nothing but society and his club. You and I, Arthur, were more alike in our tastes. Do you remember the good rides we used to have on old Brilliant and Dazzle? Mama wanted me to marry you, Arthur, and, if you care to—if you understand—Arthur, I will marry you, whenever you wish."

It came so suddenly that, for a moment, he stood as though not understanding. He had not expected it, and his pleading had been the irrepressible protest of one who knew his hope for a delusion. Then, he comprehended that all he had waited for was his, that his life had suddenly been

made perfect. Of the future, he had no fear; he felt that, once she had allowed his love to enter her life, it would find its place there, and bring its response. But with the content and rest that had suddenly changed his life came an instinctive feeling that he must spare her. She was looking for rest in his love, and he must not startle her. He took her hands in his, and, bending over her, touched her forehead with his lips.

He rose to go, reluctantly, feeling it hard that he should have to leave her, even for the short time before she would be his. She had met his suggestion of an immediate marriage in her direct fashion, confessing that there was no reason for delay, and that she would prefer to have it that very day. Ashe wished to go and bring the clergyman at once, but, with a startled look, she had cried: "No, not here—in this house!" and told him to go and arrange for their coming to the village rectory, while she made the necessary preparations for leaving immediately after. Her trunks remained, as yet, unpacked, and, in anticipation of a short stay, only a part of the house had been opened. Marie, her maid, could manage the arrangements in a few minutes.

As she gave him the brief directions for finding the rectory, she admired him standing before her, strong, awkward, uncompromising, hands thrust in pockets, head bent a little, the deep eyes looking intently into hers, contented joy in the whole attitude. As he drew his hand from his pocket, a yellow envelope came with it, and he laughed, light-heartedly, holding it out to her.

"Here is my message announcing my arrival. I overtook the boy at the gate, and got it from him. I promised him to deliver it to you, so here it is. The third street from the post-office, did you say?"

Once more, he touched her hand as she took the missive, and the touch thrilled him. Then he was gone.

The smile died out of her face as he

went away, and she sat down, overcome by the weariness that had returned on her. Once for all, she thought, she must gather herself to banish the image of Harmer that was always before her mind. That dream was ended. She did not fear that she would ever be unfaithful, even in thought, to the man whose love she had accepted. She knew herself too well, she reflected, with a momentary bitterness. For the last time, she would permit herself to think of the man she *had* loved—it was past now, and she must love him no more. The wonder she felt, that he had never spoken of his love, had no trace of resentment. Why it was so she could not even conjecture. She tried to fashion certain vague impressions, gained from enigmatical hints that had escaped him of an unhappy life, into a possible reason. Had he been married? Had he, even now, a wife? She could trace the thought to no source, and it was best so, she thought. He would never speak, and her marriage would put bounds to the temptations to see each other, which neither of them had tried to escape in the free life of foreign travel. That free, happy life! She winced, as if in physical pain, dwelling on it for the last time; she clutched the arms of the chair, convulsively, and the telegram, which she had kept in her hand, fell crumpled to the floor. That life was ended, now; the new life had begun; the new life of rest from the delirious joy and agony of love. Perhaps, it was as well. She had thought, once before, that she loved, and it brought only unhappiness. Now, there was no pretense of love, only regard and strong confidence and gratitude to the man who had remained her best friend. If there were to be, henceforth, no madness of joy in her life, there would be, at least, something very like happiness in giving happiness to Arthur. That was worth living for, and she determined, solemnly, as though making a vow, that nothing should cheat him of his reward.

With an unconscious gesture of

finality, she gathered herself together, and rose, moving quietly about the room. She glanced into a mirror, glad that, before Ashe's arrival, she had dressed in a plain traveling gown, and that she could meet this crisis of her life with almost no outward preparation. She was gathering up a few of her belongings, scattered about the room, when Marie entered.

"A telegram for madame," she said.

Mrs. Vearing took it, absently. The world outside—it seemed far away—had little interest for her, now. She did not even speculate as to the sender, while she opened the envelope, and read the message:

Just heard of your return. Will call as soon as I can get to you by automobile.

ARTHUR ASHE.

For a moment, she did not understand. Then, with a swift intuition of evil, she exclaimed, "Arthur's message!" The telegram he had handed her lay, still unopened, on the floor. She seized it, in a sudden tremor of excitement, tore it open, and the room swam before her as her eye caught the signature at the bottom of the sheet.

I am free. Shall I sail Saturday? Will be with you to-morrow for your answer. All depends on you.

PHILIP HARMER.

She held the paper in her hand, mechanically turning it over. For the moment, the irony of the fate that had thus played with her life did not occur to her. She was fascinated by the hideous color-effect of purple ink on the yellow paper. It seemed an eternity that she stood there, stunned and incapable of thought.

The necessity for action came, mercifully, before her consciousness recovered itself. The sound of wheels and the puff of Ashe's machine brought her back to the world about her, and she turned and passed into the hall. Ashe's step was already on the veranda.

"Marie," she said, as she passed up the stairs, "tell Mr. Ashe that I will be ready in a moment."

THE MOTHS WHIRL ROUND

THE moths whirl round, till the gray sparks drown
 Their fragile wings in a bath of flame—
 The candle's gleam is the garish town.

Some who seek for the poet's crown,
 Myrtle-wreath and a deathless name—
 The moths whirl round, till the gray sparks drown.

These with the pomp of cap and gown,
 Scholars, rapt in a dream of fame—
 The candle's gleam is the garish town.

Those whom the fire has beaten down,
 Women, eating the bread of shame—
 The moths whirl round, till the gray sparks drown.

Fate may flatter, or fortune frown:
 Life and death, they are both the same—
 The candle's gleam is the garish town.

Lover, libertine, bard or clown,
 Wanton strumpet or high-born dame—
 The moths whirl round, till the gray sparks drown;
 The candle's gleam is the garish town.

ERNEST MCGAFFEY.



FIRST CLAIM

THE HUSBAND—I hope you managed to get all you needed with the money
 I gave you yesterday.

THE WIFE—Er—no, dear! I got so many things I *wanted* that I hadn't
 any left.



RECRIMINATION

THE BABY (*at two A.M. and the uttermost apex of his lung power*)—Uh-
 wah! Uh-wah! Wah! Wah! Uh-wa-a-a-a-ah!

PAPA } (mentally—to each other)—You got me into this!
 MAMA }

HUMAN MATHEMATICS

By William Hurd Hillyer

DEFINITIONS

A UNIT is a single person.
When two units form a couple, each unit is called a *Married Person*.

More than two units is a *Crowd*.

Mathematics is the science of couples and crowds.

ALGEBRA—GENERAL DEFINITIONS

The Wealth of a person is called a *Positive Quantity*, and is indicated by the sign + (plus).

The Poverty of a person is called a *Negative Quantity*, and is indicated by the sign — (minus).

The name, Negative Quantity, is sometimes applied to the person who has the poverty.

A person having neither wealth nor poverty is called a *Neutral Quantity*, and is represented by the symbol 0 (zero).

Algebra is the science of persons and quantities.

The Algebraic Value of a quantity depends upon what point in the financial series is taken as zero.

When no sign is placed before a quantity, the sign — (minus) is always understood; persons of this kind being in the majority. The sign + (plus), however, is never omitted.

The Power of a person is measured by the number of times he or she is taken as a factor in financial and social enterprises.

AXIOMS

People who are recognized by the

same people are recognized by one another.

If equals dine with equals, their social advantages are equal.

If equals cut the acquaintance of equals, their social losses are equal.

If unequals dine together, their social advantages are unequal, and the greater advantage is enjoyed by the lesser magnitude.

POLYNOMIALS AND PARENTHESES

A Polynomial is a gathering of two or more persons. A gathering of two persons is generally called a *Binomial*.

Persons are sometimes grouped within Brackets. Such a group is called a *Set*.

Inside a set may occur a group enclosed in Braces. Such a group is called a *Club*.

Inside a club may occur a group enclosed in Parentheses. Such a group is called a *Clique*.

In Algebra, persons and quantities are represented by symbols; as, the symbol *he* for a masculine person, and the symbol *she* for a feminine person.

A masculine and a feminine person may be bound together by a vinculum,

as in the expression, $\overline{he + she}$. Such an expression is called a *Matrimonial Binomial*.

ADDITION

Addition is the forming of matrimonial binomials, or any polynomial.

If the algebraic values of *he* and *she* are equal, the binomial is said to be symmetrical.

If both *he* and *she* are positive quantities (see definitions), the value of the binomial will equal the sum of their wealth.

If both are negative quantities, the negative value of the binomial will equal the sum of their poverty. Such a binomial is said to be *idiotic*.

SUBTRACTION

Subtraction is the taking away of a quantity by one person from another person; as when A subtracts dollars from the pocket of B.

If the amount subtracted be less than \$10,000, the operation is called

theft; if between \$10,000 and \$100,000, *trickery*; if between \$100,000 and \$1,000,000, *smooth methods*; if more than \$1,000,000, it is called *manipulation*, or *genius*.

The person who takes away the quantity is called the *Subtractor*. The person from whom it is taken is called the *Minuend*, because his pile is diminished. The *Subtrahend* is the amount subtracted.

If a subtractor and a minuend be associated in the same financial parenthesis, the wealth of the subtractor will be increased by the wealth of the other person, and the minuend will be reduced to zero.



HIS SUIT

SHE smiled upon his suit,
Oh, lucky, lucky lad!
She smiled upon his suit,
And yet he was not glad.

His coat was all awry,
His trousers bagged, to boot;
And that's the reason why
She smiled upon his suit!

PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR.



FOR THE GOOD OF THE SERVICE

CLARA—He gave me an army-and-navy kiss
MAUD—What kind is that?
"Oh, rapid fire—sixty a minute!"



THERE ARE MANY SUCH

"PA, what is an oldest inhabitant?"
"A liar, in most instances, my son."

THE BATH CHAIR

By Beatrix Buchanan

NOT long ago, mama's bath chair was the bane of my existence; I hated it with all the strength of my passionate nature, with a fierce, ferocious, smoldering hatred, that turned my days into worlds of misery, and haunted me through my hours of sleep. Now, I love it; it is the very light of my eyes; I actually feel that I owe it apologies for my baseness in formerly disliking it, and, by way of groveling in penitence at its wheels, I will set forth on paper how my loathing turned to loving, and why.

In the first place, I had my reasons for hating it—yes, let me justify myself a little. Mama had been crippled by rheumatism for ten years and more, before she ever dreamed of investing in a chair; she had been perfectly content to limp about, aided by her ebony stick, and, doubtless, would be doing so now, had we never come to Slowmouth, six months ago. Now, most of the Slowmouth people hurried to call upon us—all but the grandee of the place, the Lady Ermyntrude Fitzgerald, who held herself aloof in a manner highly disagreeable to mama's tender pride. When mama saw that Lady Ermyntrude took her daily airings from the friendly shelter of a bath chair, her soul refused to rest in peace till she also possessed one. Lady Ermyntrude is tall, thin to emaciation, and pale as a ghost; mama is short, uncommonly stout, and her poor, dear face is always many shades too red. Lady Ermyntrude's chair was of plain, dark green, and costly simplicity; mama's was not the less costly, but her choice was of royal blue, picked out with yellow lines,

and sporting brilliant yellow wheels. Mama went into ecstasies over it when it was sent home.

"It is the very essence of all that is most *chic*," she said, pronouncing the last word as if she were describing a young fowl. "Now, Dollie, Lady Ermyntrude will call. I am sure my bath chair is much handsomer than hers."

I said nothing; the very sight of the thing in its glaring newness made me sick, while, for the life of me, I could see no connection between it and a call from her ladyship; so I remained silent, and, like the parrot, thought the more. As a matter of fact, Lady Ermyntrude never called, but that is neither here nor there.

Well, mama's next proceeding was to hire a man to wheel her out daily, morning and evening, when the weather was fine. He was not a nice man; he had shifty eyes, a vulpine mouth, and a long, narrow nose, but mama said expression was all nonsense in a bath-chair attendant; that there was a smart hang about this man, and she engaged him.

Then began a life of martyrdom for me; I was never allowed out by myself, but day after day—and the weather was cruelly fine that Summer—I had to form the escort of that heavy, lumbering chair, and note, unmoved, how passers-by would glance at mama's large, red face, make unfeeling remarks, and snigger brutally to themselves. Of course, it was all my own self-consciousness that made my misery; but why will people speak of self-consciousness as though it were a crime, when it is the greatest

misfortune that ever plagued either man or beast?

To add to my woes, the attendant was extremely careless; in getting on or off the pavements he was fond of turning the chair suddenly over on its side, and bowling mama out, as if she were a sack of potatoes. Then, more than once, he let it tilt backward, until the yellow front wheel and mama's poor feet were lifted high in the air. On these harrowing occasions, it was difficult to set the chair to rights again, for the onlookers seemed too full of laughter to render any assistance. I admit these mishaps must have tickled the imaginations of people they did not concern, but they forged brands of shame upon my heart, and made me yearn for the earth to open and engulf me in a merciful darkness.

When Elsie Turton wrote, asking me to pay her a long visit in London, I simply jumped at the chance of an escape from mama's bath chair. I had not seen Elsie since I left school, and I was painfully shy of meeting her people; but I weighed in my mind the horrors of shyness and the grinding tortures of mama's perambulator, and decided in favor of the shyness. Mama raised no objections to my going, possibly because Mr. Turton was a barrister, and she doted on professional men—have I mentioned that poor, dear papa was a soap-boiler?—so I went, armed with lots of pretty frocks and plenty of pocket-money, for mama was never stingy. I stayed with Elsie six whole weeks, and what a lovely time I enjoyed!

Elsie had one brother, an artist, Cyril, and the very first day he asked me to let him paint my portrait. He said my hair and eyes would simply make him, if he could only do them justice; and, of course, I thought it would be nice to make him, so I readily agreed. We spent delightfully cozy mornings in his studio, and, somehow, it took him days and days to paint the picture, for it was not till a week before I left that he could let me see it, completed. I think it was the loveliest girl's face I had ever seen, but

I was a wee bit disappointed, for it was not in the least like me.

"Don't you like it, Dollie?" he asked, after a time, as I did not speak.

I was seized by an overpowering shyness that I could not account for, but I managed to say: "It is very beautiful, but it isn't meant to be me, is it? I am not like that!"

He threw back his handsome head, and laughed. "And if it isn't meant for you, my Lady Innocence," he cried, "then who should it be? No, I have succeeded with it beyond my expectations; it is the living image of you, and shall go to the Academy, and win me fame! Then I shall owe all my success to you—a pleasant debt, Dollie!"

"What will you call it?" I asked. "Mama would not like my name to be under it, I know."

He turned to me with a bright smile. "That is just what I wished to consult you about," he said, quickly. "There is only one name I care to give it, and that only if you will allow." He took up a brush, and traced beneath it, in bold, large letters, these two words: "MY QUEEN." Then he came back to me, and held out his hands. "Sweet Dollie, will you allow?" he asked. And my whispered answer was, "Yes!"

During those last few days, I was the happiest girl in Christendom, but we held many and anxious consultations as to how to break the news to mama. My darling Cyril was a genius, beautiful and good; but mama loved money, of which he had none, and she thought an artist the poorest of poor things, so I knew, from the very first, she would surely object.

"Shall I escort you home, dearest, and take the bull by the horns at once?" asked Cyril.

But I cried, "No, no!" in terror. I knew mama, and he did not. Besides, when a thing annoys her she can be downright insulting, and my heart would have broken if any one had insulted Cyril.

"I had better prepare her, and tell her you want to call about me," I said,

"and then you must write and ask her to see you."

"Very well," he answered, "but you must hurry up about it; I cannot, and I will not, keep long away from 'my queen'!"

We parted. I nearly committed suicide by drowning in my own tears on the train, till I remembered mama would look at my eyes and make remarks, so I bathed them with *eau de cologne*, and made a supreme effort to cheer up. After all, Cyril loved me, and the knowledge of his love would even diminish the terrors of that awful bath chair, since, walking beside its yellow wheels, I could meditate on him.

Mama was quite glad to see me back; but, of course, the first thing she did was to put her foot into it, and flounder about, doing havoc amidst my choicest and most sacred feelings. She asked countless questions about the family. Did Mrs. Turton dress well? Did she look her age? Then:

"What does the son do? Is he reading for the bar?"

"No, mama, he is an artist, and paints such beautiful pictures!"

Mama gave a rude snort of unbelief. "Beautiful fiddlesticks! I've no patience with young people who go messing about with smelly paints, and live on their unfortunate parents. Isn't he going to do anything to earn his own living?"

I made a valiant effort to keep cool. "He means to sell his pictures, mama, and, when once he becomes known, he will make a great deal of money."

"Pooh! Nonsense! Artists never make enough to live upon—barely enough to exist! They are a lazy lot; they take up painting because they can do a little daub now and then, when the spirit moves them, and haven't got to stick at it! Besides, it is only one man in a million who has the 'spark divine,' and then he is a conceited fop, who can talk nothing but Art with a big A. You have told me enough of young Turton to convince me he is a mere good-for-nothing!"

This, of my Cyril! I boiled, I roasted, I grilled, I fried with vexation; but what could I do? Poor papa! how mama must have scrunched him! No wonder he looked so mild and sad! My tongue was now tied; Cyril's name never crossed my lips, and, in miserable silence, I took up the threads of my melancholy existence at Slowmouth, and resumed my promenades in the company of mama and her dreadful bath chair.

Because I was so richly blessed in Cyril's love, I determined to cultivate a befitting charity toward all people and all things; my *bête noire* coming under the latter heading, I did my best to conquer my repugnance to it, but in vain. I think the wretched thing must have been repainted during my absence, for the blue struck me in the face, and the yellow made me ill.

A week after my return from London, during which time I had not gained sufficient courage either to tell mama of our engagement, or to write to Cyril, he kept his word, and sent a letter to Slowmouth. It arrived at breakfast time; I saw his writing as mama cut the envelope, and the tea I was drinking went down the wrong way.

"Well, of all the insolence!" ejaculated mama, when she had read it. "Dollie, stop that abominable choking and spluttering, and listen to the impertinence of this:

"DEAR MRS. COTTERILL:

"I arrived last night at the Burlington, and hope you will allow me the pleasure of calling on you this afternoon at four o'clock.

"Yours sincerely,

"CYRIL A. TURTON."

"One thing is certain: no beggarly young artists come prowling round here, or my name is not Susannah Cotterill."

"He is not beggarly, mama; he is nothing short of a genius; and," I went on, lamely, "he is a special friend of mine."

Mama solemnly put down the letter, and looked at me across the urn.

"Dorothea, explain yourself. What do you mean by a 'special friend'?"

When mama stares at me in that cold-blooded way, and speaks in that peculiarly impressive voice, icy shivers chase one another down my spine, and I am entirely at her mercy.

"Mama, I ought to have told you before; but—but Cyril asked me to marry him, and I—said I would—if you will consent," I stammered, babyish tears rushing into my eyes. "He is so good and clever, and I—"

"Spare me your rhapsodies, Dorothea!" interrupted mama, still in those awful, blood-curdling tones. "You have said enough; I see how the land lies."

She rose as majestically as she could, and limped toward her writing-desk. In a few minutes, she handed me what she had written.

"Read this, and understand when I tell you that it is the last communication I shall have with either of you on so ridiculous a subject."

Trembling, I took the paper, and read:

"Mrs. Cotterill presents her compliments to Mr. Cyril Turton, and begs he will not give himself the trouble of calling upon her, as she has not the slightest desire to make his acquaintance, and could under no consideration allow an engagement to exist between him and her daughter."

That was all—brief and sweet, I suppose. I looked at mama; I knew that steely glint in her eyes.

"Very well, mama," I said, meekly, feeling it worse than useless to dash my head against a stone wall; and so she rang the bell, and despatched her maid with the letter to the hotel. Then I had to read the paper aloud to her before going out; sobs choked my voice, but I think she rather enjoyed them, as proof of her power. How miserable I was! However, where there's a will there's a way, and, when I went to get ready to accompany mama in her loathsome constitutional, I found time to scribble Cyril a brief account of what had occurred. After passing and repassing a letter-box half-a-dozen times, I summoned up the courage to slip my letter in, and, for the first time in my life, blessed mama's

bath chair as the means of bringing me to that best of institutions, the post.

I spent a dreadful day and a sleepless night. I had told Cyril on no account to write to me, as mama saw all my correspondence, but to let me catch a sight of his dear self on the Invalid's Hill, where we daily promenaded up and down. Next morning, there he was, the darling! looking a perfect vision of beauty in a nice, gray tweed, and he just walked backward and forward with the rest of the people, gazing at me with such a hope-inspiring look in his eyes, that I began to feel quite brave. We had passed each other several times when he drew a little nearer, and, as we met, brushed so clumsily against my arm that I dropped my parasol. "Oh, I beg your pardon!" he said, and picked it up for me, as if I were an utter stranger; but, as he gave it me, I felt a scrap of paper pushed into my hand. In another moment, I had rejoined mama with flaming cheeks.

"Why don't you look where you are going, Dollie?" she asked, under cover of a gigantic yawn; the monotonous driving made her sleepy. I said I was sorry, and the matter dropped, but I thought we should never get home that day. In the privacy of my own chamber, I devoured the precious note, which read:

"Cheer up, my queen. Like *Mr. Micawber* I shall wait on here, in the hope of something turning up. As for you, be like unto the immortal *Emma*, and never, never, desert him who is your *Micawber*.

"C."

Very short, I considered, and yet it was just like him, trying to cheer me even then, when the outlook was so sooty black. Well, to cut a long story short, every morning, when we turned around on the Hill, the first object that met my eyes was Cyril, like patience on a monument, awaiting my arrival on one of the benches at the bottom, and the glances he shot at me from his dear, gray eyes gave me courage for the rest of the day. At this time, too, mama grew kinder; I suppose she thought I bore my disappointment

philosophically, but I felt a fearful hypocrite when she patted my cheek, and said: "You are a good child, Dollie!" Praise from mama was rare indeed.

The crisis came in the most unexpected manner. One sunny morning, we set out as usual, Morris, the attendant, leading the way, and solemnly towing behind him the precious chair at a funereal, snail-like pace, I creeping along at the side as if to the manner born, and we turned down the Hill. Yes, there was my faithful Cyril in his usual seat, and my heart had just given its never-failing bound of joyous recognition, when, quite suddenly, Morris gave a violent swerve to one side, let go the chair, and made a dash for something on the edge of the pavement. To my horror, the bath chair then took the law into its own hands, or wheels; it started, zigzag fashion, alone down the Hill, moving first with some nervous uncertainty, then increasing its speed as it found itself successful, and wobbling on its springs in a truly alarming manner. I flung up my arms, and tore after it in hot pursuit, emitting wild cries of, "Save her!" as I ran; but, fast as my legs could carry me, I could not overtake it, for the wretched thing was now dashing on at a terrific rate. Poor mama! It could end only in one way: either the chair would bounce off the pavement into the road, where passing carts added to my terrors, or it would journey down the whole length of the Hill, and land the helpless victim with a crash through the shop-windows that barred the end of its route.

The many people promenading about stood and gaped at so unusual a sight; perhaps they thought it was the latest fad in ladies' motor carriages. At any rate, they never raised one finger among the lot of them to help or interfere. Small boys ran hooting at my side; but their hideous yells only increased my fears, and completed the addling of my brain. Would the chair never stop? Lurching sideways, now this way, now that—was my poor mama to be killed before my very

eyes? But no! Cyril—my brave Cyril, my noble Cyril—came to the rescue. He rose quite slowly from his seat, and stood in the exact path the chair was taking in its demoniacal descent; then, when it approached him, he sprang forward and flung himself, with outstretched arms, upon mama, taking her—chair and all—into his embrace. His weight brought it to a full stop, and, in a few moments, I arrived, breathless, and not a little alarmed as to the effect this would have upon mama. For once, her poor face was quite white; she was breathing in little gasps as if she had personally run the race, and was clutching at Cyril's hand as if she could never let him go.

"My poor, poor mama!" I cried, seizing her other hand and squeezing it in desperate agitation.

"I am not hurt, my child," she said, quite gently and slowly; then, turning to Cyril: "Young man, I am very much obliged to you for what you have done, but I am too much shaken now to thank you as you deserve. Come and see me this afternoon, when I shall feel more like myself, and I shall try to prove my gratitude. Morris!"—for the culprit, scarlet-faced, came running up—"why did you let go of my chair?"

"Please, mum, I'm very sorry; but I sees an 'arf-sovereign a-lyin'—"

"That will do," said mama, sadly; "now take me home."

I was too much upset even to look at Cyril, but I know he murmured something polite as Morris, with gingerly care, proceeded to pull mama up the Hill again, while the interested onlookers now indulged in their heartless merriment. When we reached home, poor mama was so exhausted that she retired to her boudoir, and I saw nothing more of her till she sent for me after luncheon. She was lying on her sofa, looking better, and greeted me with a funny little laugh.

"Dollie, what silly thing do you think I did this morning? I asked that kind young man to call, and never gave him my name or address. Now, of course, he can't come; isn't it a pity?"

I blushed until I thought even my hair must be changing color; then I reflected that I had had about enough of deception, and that it was more than probable the road to happiness did not lie that way.

"Mama," I said, with an assumption of boldness, "I think he will call, for he knows who you are. It was Cyril Turton who saved you from being hurt this morning." Then I held my breath, and waited for the end of the world to come. Mama lay still for some time, looking at me; then she closed her eyes, and appeared to be thinking deeply, while I learned what it really was to feel all arms and legs. After a time, mama looked up again.

"Since that is so, Dollie, when he calls you had better receive him, for I fancy your thanks will be more to his taste than mine; and, when you

have had your say, bring him up here to tea. Dollie, don't give your poor old mother too bad a character to him; she knows she is a cross old woman, but she is rather glad she has had to change her mind, and haul up the flag of truce. I—I should like to see you happy, Dollie!"

Dear old mama! For the first time in my life, I hugged her with genuine pleasure. Wasn't it good of her to take it that way?

Well, in the afternoon, I received Cyril in the drawing-room; and, when we went up to the boudoir, mama had to send for fresh tea. When Cyril had gone, I crept down into the anteroom, where the bath chair reposes, and dropped a grateful kiss upon its ugly, blue cushions. Dear thing! it is not so wonderful that I love it after all, is it?



POOR THINGS

THE ball-room is gleaming with brilliance and light,
Of beauty and wealth there's no lack;
But there isn't a woman in all that vast throng
Who has a whole dress to her back!



A FEW YEARS HENCE

SHE—You are an hour late, dear.

HE—Yes. I missed the limited express, and came down from my office in an accommodation elevator.



FASHION'S PARADOX

JAGGLES—I suppose people in society are very highly polished.

WAGGLES—They probably think they are, but I have always found them dull.



REPUTATION is recognition of ability, followed by unrecognition of inability.